

DISCLAIMER: I read mostly relatively new stuff! So the vast majority of the books on this list are from the 21st century, most of them less than 10 years old. I also generally don't read: romances, serious generational family dramas, biographies, anything that even vaguely smacks of "woman goes to foreign country to discover herself," or YA fiction. I *do* read a lot of speculative fiction (sci-fi, dystopias, sci-fi dystopias), genre fiction (horror and fantasy), and contemporary fiction that doesn't fall into the categories above. Nonfiction is a grab-bag, but apparently I read a lot of memoirs.

Most recent update: 2/4/19 (added *The Masquerade* series)

FICTION

Sci-fi/dystopias:

- *American War* by Omar El Akkad
 - An alternate-history story in which the Civil War ends in a tie and everything is awful because there's also been a climate apocalypse. It's awesome. Super compelling main character, although it does get pretty grim.
- *Remembrance of Earth's Past* trilogy (*The Three-Body Problem*, *The Dark Forest*, and *Death's End*) by Liu Cixin
 - That one series that I can't shut up about. Super hard sci-fi sent during the Cultural Revolution! Incredibly detailed descriptions of astrophysics! Weird trippy plot twists that will blow your mind! It's awesome, everyone should read this stuff because Chinese sci-fi is where it's happening.
- *The Fireman* by Joe Hill
 - Kind of a sci-fi/dystopia/horror/thriller. It's super long but it reads really quickly and moves fast. Think of it as a zombie apocalypse story but without the zombies and people spontaneously combusting instead. Hell yeah.
- *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel
 - A gentle dystopia! Featuring Shakespeare, theatre, music, and a genuinely horrifying scene set in an airport, but it's generally pretty chill and dreamlike, you know, for a dystopia.
- *All the Birds in the Sky* by Charlie Jane Anders
 - Ok this one is kind of niche but I really liked it? A sci-fi/fantasy mashup featuring talking birds, the San Francisco tech industry, literal witches, and some kid low-key causing the Singularity. It's a little twee occasionally but the writing is actually sometimes genuinely brilliant.
- *Version Control* by Dexter Palmer
 - Super good realistic time-travel sci-fi? Don't read *Dark Matter* because that one is terribly written, read this instead. Kind of a family drama, but

with hard sci-fi elements. Also the author is from Princeton and the book is set in New Jersey around the area, ha.

- *The Windup Girl* by Paolo Bacigalupi
 - Biopunk Bangkok! Let's call this one an environmental treatise wrapped inside some super cool speculation on what agriculture, climate change, and bioengineering might look like in 100 years.
- *World War Z* by Max Brooks
 - LMAO LET ME EXPLAIN MYSELF. Way more intelligently done than the movie, with a super cool premise; it's written as a series of diaries/interviews/journal entries/memoirs recorded by survivors of the zombie apocalypse, looking back on the apocalypse years. It's actually really well done, and jumps between a bunch of different (and super interesting) characters and scenarios without being annoying or overly self-indulgent. Better than his previous book, *The Zombie Survival Guide*, and full of genuinely memorable moments (the church scene, the Himalayan mountain pass scene, the submarine scene, the Paris catacombs scene, the whole section about the Redecker plan and the apartheid-as-zombie-outbreak metaphor...)
- *The Forever War* by Joe Haldeman
 - A classic, and for good damn reason. Can you believe this book was written in 1974?? Good God. It's not only a Vietnam War allegory that hits like a slap across the face, it's also startlingly fresh and relevant and will probably remain so until, you know, we actually go to space and immediately get in a fistfight with the first intelligent species we make contact with. More thoughtful, imaginative, and well-crafted than a lot of the sci-fi being churned out now, and written by a Vietnam vet who did not come to play.
- *The Water Knife* by Paolo Bacigalupi
 - Bacigalupi strikes again! I liked this one slightly less than *The Windup Girl*, but it felt way closer to home. Again, his worldbuilding is excellent. Basic premise: climate change apocalypse ravages the United States and the southwestern states are dying of drought. Super, super interesting take on the collapse (or lack thereof) of the U.S. in the near future, what federalism, globalism, statehood and rule of law look like as everything's going to hell, and what happens to a society where water is currency. Tbh some of it goes a bit overboard for my taste and it kind of starts off slow, but the second half picks up like nobody's business. I'd recommend *Windup Girl* first, but if you liked that one definitely pick this one up too.
- *The Gone World* by Tom Sweterlitsch
 - Man, this time-travel police-procedural murder-mystery apocalypse novel is a super weird book. But it moves fast and it's fun as hell to read, especially if you like time-travel sci-fi mumbo-jumbo with sprinkles of space opera shenanigans here and there. Pros: super interesting concept

(time traveling to solve a murder mystery) taken to its absolute limits, featuring the weirdest apocalypse I think I've ever seen. Respectful treatment of a physically disabled main female character. Thoughtful speculation on the practical uses and effects of time travel. A totally unexpected and creepy occult-y, body-horror heavy element which keeps the story from being too on-the-nose. Cons: very few people in this book talk or feel very much like real people, but they're just real enough to keep you going. The ending felt a little rushed. Everyone spends a lot of time driving (seriously, *a lot of time* driving). The main character doesn't seem to sleep at all and I spent the whole book being worried about her health. Anyway, it's just fun enough, just smart enough, and won't necessarily take like a billion brain cells to get through. Why not.

- *The Expanse* series by James S. A. Corey (*Leviathan Wakes*, *Caliban's War*, *Abbadon's Gate*, *Cibola Burn*, *Nemesis Games*, *Babylon's Ashes*, and *Persepolis Rising*)
 - I know, I know: that's a lot of books, they have to be read in order or nothing makes any damn sense, and tbh the first one's not the strongest entry in the series. But they're fun popcorn entertainment, they read fast, they're just episodic enough that you don't have to read them all in one sitting to keep everything straight, and the plotting/characterization generally improves throughout the series. Plus they made a TV show out of it and George R. R. Martin likes it, so what do I know, huh? TL;DR: a fun space opera that's just well-fleshed-out and science-y enough to be plausible, but not so jargon-y that it makes you want to tear your hair out. (Bonus personal ranking of the series, from most to least favorite entry: *Nemesis Games* (book 5), *Caliban's War* (book 2), *Babylon's Ashes* (book 6), *Persepolis Rising* (book 7), *Abbadon's Gate* (book 3), *Leviathan Wakes* (book 1), and *Cibola Burn* (book 4).)
- *Invisible Planets: An Anthology of Contemporary Chinese SF in Translation*, edited and translated by Ken Liu
 - Worth it for the measured, thoughtful introduction and translation notes along with the essays at the end of the book alone (particularly "The Torn Generation: Chinese Science Fiction in a Culture in Translation" by Chen Qiufan), but the stories themselves are also uniformly excellent. Personal favorites: "The Year of the Rat" by Chen Qiufan, "Folding Beijing" by Hao Jingfang, and "Taking Care of God" by Liu Cixin. Read these for something different and refreshing; the authors' voices really sing.
- *The Centenal Cycle* trilogy by Malka Older (*Infomocracy*, *Null States*, and *State Tectonics*)
 - Up-front disclaimer: I didn't find these books all that fun to read, but they're fascinating. Older is a political scientist/academic by trade and it shows: the plotting is a bit of a snooze, but her imagined future is something seriously special. Basic overview: in the late 21st century, most of the

world has been divided into 100,000-person political units called centenals (hence the name of the trilogy), which vote for their own political representatives in a process called micro-democracy; the whole process is overseen by an organization called Information which administers the 10-year voting cycles and serves as a global omnipresent knowledge network. If that premise sounds interesting to you, give the first book a shot – it'll at least give you a bunch of cool hypotheticals to chew on.

Fantasy:

- The *Broken Earth* trilogy by N.K. Jemison (*The Fifth Season*, *The Obelisk Gate*, and *The Stone Sky*)
 - SUPER SUPER GOOD, especially if you like fantasy and are sick of medieval-Europe-sword-and-dragon fantasies. The worldbuilding is fascinating, the characters are excellently written and it's just super unique and refreshing overall. Read the whole trilogy, they're equally astonishingly good.
- *The Paper Menagerie* by Ken Liu
 - Full confession – I used to really dislike reading short story collections but this is the book that straight-up converted me. Fantasy, history, social commentary, and really excellent writing and worldbuilding all in one! Come for the Nebula *and* Hugo Award-winning title story (which is perfectly nice), stay for the one about the Nanjing Massacre and the man who travels back in time to record memory, which *destroyed me*.
- *Six of Crows* by Leigh Bardugo
 - Genuinely the only YA novel I've read in the past 5-6 years that I've actually liked (well, I accidentally picked it up and started reading it before I realized it was YA, and by then it was too late for me). If you can get over how everyone's like, 17 (LMAOOOO WHY) it's a super-entertaining heist novel full of juicy tropes like: assembling a team of specially-skilled individuals! Ambushes on the docks! Infiltrating a super-secure location in order to steal something very important! Secrets! PG-13 sexual tension! Takes place within the world of Bardugo's Grisha Trilogy but you don't need to have read those in order to understand this, although it helps (the worldbuilding is pretty cool but the previous trilogy isn't as well-written or interesting as this book, which can stand alone). A guilty pleasure that won't make you feel disgusted with yourself after you're done, haha. (Also has a sequel, *Crooked Kingdom*, which unfortunately isn't as good.)
- The *Divine Cities* trilogy by Robert Jackson Bennett (*City of Stairs*, *City of Blades*, and *City of Miracles*)
 - Despite the generic titles which unfortunately kind of hearken back to Cassandra Clare's *Mortal Instruments* series (rest in absolute pieces), this series of urban fantasy spy thrillers/murder mysteries goes way harder and is way better than it has any right to be. It's the rare fantasy series

that doesn't take itself super seriously—you can tell because the first page isn't a pretentious-as-hell map that requires you to memorize a bunch of made-up place names in order to just make sense of the story. The world, the mythology, and the basic premise is fantastic (“the gods are real and, uh, we killed them”), the themes are satisfyingly meaty, the characters are wonderful (bonus points for fantasy characters who talk like real people, *extra* bonus points for main female characters over the age of 35), and the plotting is surprisingly airtight and relentless. Perfect for the plane/beach/train/couch/wherever you have some time to kill, because they read fast and you may want to read all three of them in one sitting.

- The *Amberlough Dossier* series by Lara Elena Donnelly (currently *Amberlough* and *Armistice*)
 - “Lush” is a good descriptor for these twisty, intricate, glamorous, art-nouveau-esque spy thrillers: think John Le Carré’s cerebral plotting crossed with the visual aesthetic of *Bioshock* and a healthy dose of geopolitical speculation. The first book didn’t sell me 100% but (imo) the second one cements Donnelly as someone with both hands on the wheel who knows exactly what she’s doing. The many characters are complicated but well-done, the plot is thorny and kind of talky but also tries very hard not to lose you, and the romance/relationships are mature and compelling.
- *Foundryside* by Robert Jackson Bennett (first in an upcoming series)
 - RJB strikes again! IMO not as mature, complex, and well-developed as *Divine Cities*, but it’s fun, campy, and classically fantastical. Bennett has a real talent for world- and mythology building, humor, and quick-paced plotting, and the heist plot in this one is hella fun and won’t strain your brain too much.
- *The Masquerade* series by Seth Dickinson (two books as of early 2019: *The Traitor Baru Cormorant* and *The Monster Baru Cormorant*)
 - Holy *shit*. I’m gonna jump the gun and recommend this whole series before even reading *Monster* because the first book *blew my entire mind*. The blurb calls it “geopolitical fantasy” but I call it “kinda like if *Game of Thrones* were set in an alternate-universe 19th century, with less bullshit gender politics and way more racial and cultural diversity. But also eugenics.” The genius of the first book is that you know *exactly what is going to happen* but somehow you’ll still be on the edge of your seat? Oh, and in hindsight the pacing is genius as well – starts kinda slow and then accelerates relentlessly until by the time you’re around two-thirds of the way through you’re about ready to rip all of your hair out in agonized anticipation. I finished it literally right before I ran here to write a recommendation for it and I’m still reeling from the last 50 pages or so. I need a drink and also the second book, and maybe a quiet place to lie down for 10 years. Good god.

Horror:

- *The Shining* by Stephen King
 - IMO, better than the movie. Best read in full daylight surrounded by other people.
- *The Deep* by Nick Cutter
 - More weird and creepy than scary tbh, but I'm putting it on this list because if I still find it creepy six months after finishing it, then it was probably scarier than I originally thought. If nothing else, it's a solid chamber-piece exercise in tone and dread. Four characters (and a dog!), trapped in a scientific base on the very bottom of the ocean. As you can probably imagine, things...don't go well. Best read somewhere far, far away from any significant body of water.
- *The Hunger* by Alma Katsu
 - Historical horror on the American frontier (aka Little House on the Prairie horror!) Not super scary, but the atmosphere of dread is great. There are a ton of characters but they're very easy to keep track of (if a little cinematically overdrawn at times), and the plot's sufficiently propulsive to keep you reading, even when you already know what's going to happen. Pro tip: read the Wikipedia page for "Donner Party" after you're done with this book – the author really did her research, and it shows.
- *Little Heaven* by Nick Cutter
 - Less atmospheric than *The Deep*, more...nasty. Seriously, Cutter goes full-out with the imagery and it's gross as all get-out and will make you want to wash your hands thoroughly after certain scenes. Also considerably scarier IMO, mainly because someone thought it would be a good idea to have this book *illustrated* (why????) The illustrations are excellent, by the way. Sleep well!

Mystery:

- Anything by Tana French, but in particular the Dublin Murder Squad series (*Into the Woods*, *The Likeness*, *The Secret Place*, *Broken Harbor*, *Faithful Place*, and *The Trespasser*), followed by *The Witch Elm*
 - Idk man these are just really solid detective novels if you're feeling that. French is really good at creating a sense of place, and her novels do this super interesting progression where a minor character from one novel becomes the focus character of the next one, so it always feels fresh. The pacing is good, and they're grounded enough that they rarely (or never) feel cheesy or sensational. Would recommend reading in order; would also recommend starting from the 2nd one if you want to try the series out, because *Into the Woods* is by far the weakest link in the series.

- Addendum 10/2018: I take that back, read *The Witch Elm* first – it's standalone (not part of the interlinked Dublin Murder Squad series) and stronger than *Into the Woods* in every way, featuring more interesting characters and a better ending (imo). It's also a great intro to her talky, dreamy, nostalgic, compulsively propulsive style, *and* a nearly flawless example of the classic plot-rising-falling action chart (check out the scenes that happen at exactly 1/3 and 2/3 of the way through and you'll see what I mean), *and* featuring an ending that blows all of your expectations clean out of the damn water. Stephen King liked it too! It's good! Read it!

Literary fiction:

- *The Orphan Master's Son* by Adam Johnson
 - SO GOOD. Also it won the Pulitzer so you know it's extra good. Set in (and about) North Korea, kind of magic-realism-y and bleak, but in a good way. Like being punched in the face repeatedly by *awesome writing*.
- *The Sympathizer* by Viet Thanh Nguyen
 - Also won a Pulitzer, ha. About as trippy and cerebral as *The Orphan Master's Son*, but it's narrated by a Vietnamese double agent in the days before the fall of Saigon. It's satirical and just super intelligently constructed.
- *The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead
 - Won the National Book Award, and by this point I'm just name-dropping awards lmao. But worth the hype! Call it dystopia/historical fiction/thriller. Not set in the future, but in an alternate historical past where the Underground Railroad is, y'know, a literal railroad. It's super good.
- *The Association of Small Bombs* by Karan Mahajan
 - Lmao another semi-war story. It's about a terrorist bombing in Pakistan, and its aftermath. It's an easy read, but it has the potential to really mess you up. The use of perspective is super good here.
- *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* by Richard Flanagan
 - Just a really, really excellent war story. Depressing, but super evocative. Also a WWII prisoner-of-war story that's not from an American perspective (Flanagan is Australian) and not set in either the European or Pacific theaters? Hell yeah.
- *Chemistry* by Weike Wang
 - Really good? Also the only book in this section without any violence in it haha. The character voice is so strong in this, plus the author has a super interesting background and you get the sense that it's coming from a very personal place. A little absurd, really funny, super heartfelt, and also a really quick read.
- *Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid

- Worth the hype. I put off reading this because I read the premise and was like “meh,” but it’s totally worth it. A magical realism-y modern refugee love story, super evocative and lyrically written. It’s pretty short and goes down super easy but I’ve been thinking about it for ages. I also thought it was pretty bold, and it’s very straightforward in one sense but deceptive in others.
- *The Vegetarian* by Han Kang
 - Super short, but will stay with you. Eerie magical realism, verges on horror at times in a good way. The translation is really excellent – Kang has a style all her own and the writing is minimal but super rich in tone. Would also recommend *Human Acts*, her follow-up (which is less creepy and arguably less memorable but more personal and emotionally devastating).
- *Less* by Andrew Sean Greer
 - The literary equivalent of cotton candy, but bittersweet. Weird, airy, hopelessly romantic, and whimsical as all get-out (so pretty different from everything else on this list lol), but I think it sticks the landing and the—occasionally beautiful—style perfectly marries the substance. Funny, sad, sweet, good-natured, and tenderhearted, just like its protagonist.
- *Sourdough* by Robin Sloan
 - This is kind of a weirdly niche and specific recommendation, BUT it’s literally everything I like in one book: food and the love thereof, off-kilter ambiguously magical realism, incredibly specific San Francisco references, *even more specific* Bay Area restaurant references (including a blatant Alice Waters/Chez Panisse stand-in), lampooning of modern technology/programming culture (with vast amounts of shade thrown at Soylent in particular), and a witty, playful tone that never becomes too enamored with its own cleverness. It’s short, refreshing, optimistic, and charming. So charming! So delightful! Also, as promised by the title, it’s about bread. What’s not to like?
- *Severance* by Ling Ma
 - WOW this one really sings. It’s also got one of my favorite titles ever – severance in both the literal sense (as in severance pay – it makes more sense in context) and from family, from society, from capitalism, from the city, from the past. It’s both a post-apocalyptic story and one about the emptiness of modern life, the immigrant experience, and the everyday search for meaning, while *also* being a weirdly affecting portrait of New York City as it is today. May depress the hell out of you, but it’s beautiful.
- *Private Citizens* by Tony Tulathimutte
 - What a weird, weird book. Dense, satirical, light on its feet (with perhaps the notable exception of the ending), eminently unpredictable, occasionally gross, occasionally brilliant. The prose (imo) is spectacular. I can’t believe the author went to Stanford and came out swinging with something like *this*.

NONFICTION

- *The Opposite of Loneliness* by Marina Keegan
 - A collection of essays by Keegan, who was killed in a car accident only a few days after she graduated from Yale. A quick read, but not necessarily an easy one.
- *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi
 - Ugh read this one. A short memoir by a neurosurgeon who contracted cancer in the last year of his residency. It's beautifully done and will absolutely destroy you. The equivalent of an emotional H-bomb right in the feelings ☹
- *Everybody Lies: Big Data, New Data, and What the Internet Can Tell Us About Who We Really Are* by Seth Stephens-Davidowitz
 - Eh it's fun! Not super super illuminating, but his examples are cool and the writing is clear. Strikes a good balance between being scientific and being accessible.
- *Life in Code: A Personal History of Technology* by Ellen Ullman
 - Picked this up randomly but really liked it! Super cool author who has a lot of very pointed things to say about the evolution of the tech industry, and San Francisco in particular. Also a different perspective from the traditional 70's wunderkind dudebro tech narrative.
- *Ghettoside: A True Story of Murder in America* by Jill Leovy
 - Ugh this one is so good. Nonfiction but reads like a crime thriller. The reporting is superb and the characterization is amazing. Feels effortless even in the heaviest sections.
- *Excellent Sheep: The Miseducation of the American Elite and the Way to a Meaningful Life* by William Deresiewicz
 - Lmao I'd be interested to hear someone else's thoughts on this book, but I thought it was really well done? It's here if only because I found it much more meaningful recently than the first time I read his famous essay (which is an excerpt from the book itself).
- *The Lost City of the Monkey God* by Douglas Preston
 - Indiana Jones, if a) Indiana Jones were, you know, real and b) if Indian Jones were an actual archeologist instead of a bounty hunter who destroys every artifact he gets his grubby hands on. Super interesting and engaging, one of those stories you can't believe actually happened. Basically a classic old-fashioned Rudyard Kipling-style jungle adventure story, but with way less racism, way less creepy romanticism of colonialism, and way more science. Hell yeah.
- *From Here to Eternity: Traveling the World to Find The Good Death* by Caitlin Doughty

- This one came out of nowhere and just blew me out of the water. Caitlin Doughty, celebrity mortician (first of all, *what???*) spends like a year just gallivanting around the world going on morbid adventures, and the result is: 1) *hilarious*, 2) heartfelt (aka this book made me feel a Real Emotion), and 3) actually fascinating. Like, I guarantee that you will learn something from this book that you'll remember a month or a year later, probably *many* somethings.
- *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes, and Other Lessons from the Crematorium* by Caitlin Doughty
 - Ok so after reading *From Here to Eternity* I felt super compelled to hunt this one down and read it too, and it's also a blast! Would equally recommend, although it's a bit different. This one (her first book) is very much a memoir about Doughty's life and career development, so it's much more personal in nature than her second book (although equally hilarious and informative—I guarantee you'll learn a lot about the American death industry). Anyway: she's fantastic, I love her stuff, would absolutely recommend.
- *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* by Timothy Snyder
 - Under the no-longer implausible premise that we see at least one liberal Western democracy descend into the hell that is fascism within the next twenty or thirty years: they will come for Timothy Snyder first. That's pretty much the greatest praise I can give this book. Bonus: it's super short and to the point. Wholeheartedly endorsed for practicality and the zero-BS approach.
- *Priestdaddy: A Memoir* by Patricia Lockwood
 - ONE OF THE FUNNIEST BOOKS I HAVE EVER READ. Lockwood is a treasure and a gem, I hope she writes more prose but if her poetry (she's originally a poet) is also as hilarious as this book is then I'll read it all in a heartbeat. It's about her family and especially her dad, who is a Catholic priest, who apparently aren't supposed to get married and have kids (don't look at me, I ain't Catholic) but somehow found a loophole in the rules (???) and...got married and had kids I guess. It's disarmingly heartfelt—the first half is a straight-up laugh riot and then the second half kind of sneaks up on you and sucker punches you in the gut. Anyway, PLEASE READ THIS, but maybe not if you're a hardcore Catholic I guess (don't say I didn't warn you).
- *The Girl Who Smiled Beads: A Memoir of War and What Comes After* by Clementine Wamariya
 - Okay, yes, it's a Rwandan genocide memoir, but this one is really special. Despite having a *literal* Oprah-worthy storybook story, Wamariya is much more interested in the aftermath ("what comes after") than recounting her trauma for the millionth time, which is incredibly fascinating. Her story is heartbreaking and provocative and brave.

- *Educated: A Memoir* by Tara Westover
 - Like *The Girl Who Smiled Beads*, this really isn't what it looks like on the surface. Instead of a straightforward rags-to-riches story ("uneducated Mormon hillbilly girl rises from the ashes of poverty and joins the ranks of the educated elite!"), it's also a measured, bracing meditation on family, faith, memory, history, and the construction of the self. On top of all of that it's a devastating family story, told with honesty and vulnerability. Read this instead of *Hillbilly Elegy*, which is, frankly, kind of overhyped and not nearly as interesting a story.
- Anything by Mary Roach (in order of publication date: *Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers*; *Spook: Science Tackles the Afterlife*; *Bonk: The Curious Coupling of Science and Sex*; *Packing for Mars: The Curious Science of Life in the Void*; *My Planet: Finding Humor in the Oddest Places*; *Gulp: Adventures in the Alimentary Canal*; and *Grunt: The Curious Science of Humans at War*)
 - Almost every single one of her books I've read has a line of praise from the *Washington Post* on the cover calling her "America's funniest science writer," and as far as I know, they're right! She's hilarious, her books are fun as hell, and you'll learn interesting stuff without having to concentrate super hard. Disclaimer: as of July 2018 I've read all her books except for *Spook* and *My Planet*, but I'll vouch for them anyway because the rest of them are consistently entertaining and well-researched.
- *Ten Restaurants That Changed America* by Paul Freedman
 - A fascinating history of America's culinary scene, the key word being "history." Freedman is a medieval historian by trade, and he's got a meticulous eye for detail and an excellent sense of historical context. A good balance between academic and accessible, while still being reasonably entertaining. Guaranteed to help you impress (or show up) a NYC food snob.
- *Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup* by John Carreyrou
 - Oof. This one's worth it for the wild story alone. The rise and fall of Elizabeth Holmes (and her company, Theranos), as told firsthand by the journalist who almost singlehandedly brought down ten years' worth of lies, misdirection, and straight-up fraud. If you like [this excerpt](#), you'll like this book a lot.