

THE OPRAH
MAGAZINE



OPRAH'S
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BOOK CLUB
PICK!

THIS MONTH'S BIG QUESTION

WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU HAPPY?

If you can define it,
you're one step closer!

*"For me it's
about having
a gorgeous day
all to myself"*

—OPRAH

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98 GET CARRIED AWAY We've rounded up summer's best books, which will take you from coast to coast: a murder mystery in Maine, an investigation of the Flint water crisis, a memoir about an unconventional upbringing in California, and 32 other transporting titles.

ON THE COVER: Oprah photographed by Ruven Afanador. **FASHION EDITOR:** Jenny Capitain. **HAIR:** Nicole Mangrum. **MAKEUP:** Derrick Rutledge. *On Oprah:* Shirt, Lafayette 148 New York; lafayette148ny.com. Skirt, Brunello Cucinelli; similar styles available at brunellocucinelli.com. Earrings, Oprah's own.

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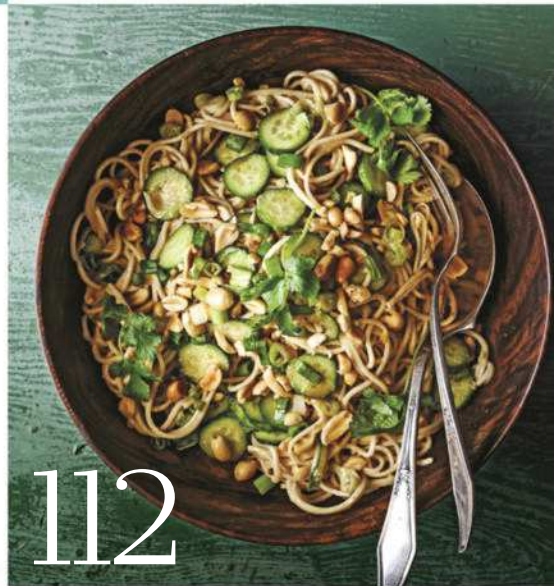
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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ANDREA DE SANTIS, BETH HOECKEL, GREGOR HALENDA, ED ANDERSON, RICHARD MAJCHRZAK/STUDIO D, BRETT RYDER, PETER ROSA



A close-up photograph of a person's hand with a gold bracelet, resting on a white, draped fabric. The lighting is soft and warm, creating a romantic and intimate atmosphere.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER OF
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Love Is _____

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What book makes you happy?

The entire Harry Potter series. I didn't see the appeal when it was first released, but I've been hooked since I randomly bought the third book from a tiny airport bookstore. The stories may be written for children, but the joy they bring is ageless.

Panda Love: The Secret Lives of Pandas by nature photographer Ami Vitale, who went to China to document the furry little creatures in the wild. Cute animals, eternal happiness.

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Brooke Raymond

The Princess Bride by William Goldman. It's the first book I read as a kid that made me feel I was being talked to like an adult. I've reread it every year for many years.

I never get tired of Barbara Ann Kipfer's *14,000 Things to Be Happy About*. It's literally a book-length list—so simple yet so brilliant.

Oprah's *The Wisdom of Sundays: Life-Changing Insights from Super Soul Conversations*. I almost teared up when I read Jimmy Carter's passage about being proud that the U.S. didn't drop any bombs during his administration.

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INSTAGRAMMER OF THE MONTH

@travelbug71

A Day in the Life of Marlon Bundo by Jill Twiss. The thought of children reading it and learning that every bunny deserves love and respect makes my heart happy.

The Misadventures of Awkward Black Girl by Issa Rae. Her self-deprecating sense of humor makes the book incredibly relatable.

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith. It breaks your heart, then builds it back up with a story of the resilience of the human spirit. My soul is fed and renewed when I read it.

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My family's history book. I love rereading the story of my ancestors' immigration to this country and looking at their photos.

Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice, while picturing Colin Firth as Mr. Darcy.

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The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein. It's a reminder to put others before ourselves.

Tina Fey's Bossypants. It hasn't stopped being funny yet.

Princely Advice for a Happy Life by HSH Prince Alexi Lubomirski. I read excerpts from this to my two oldest sons at bedtime. It's heartfelt advice from a father (who happens to be a prince) to his sons on all aspects of life.

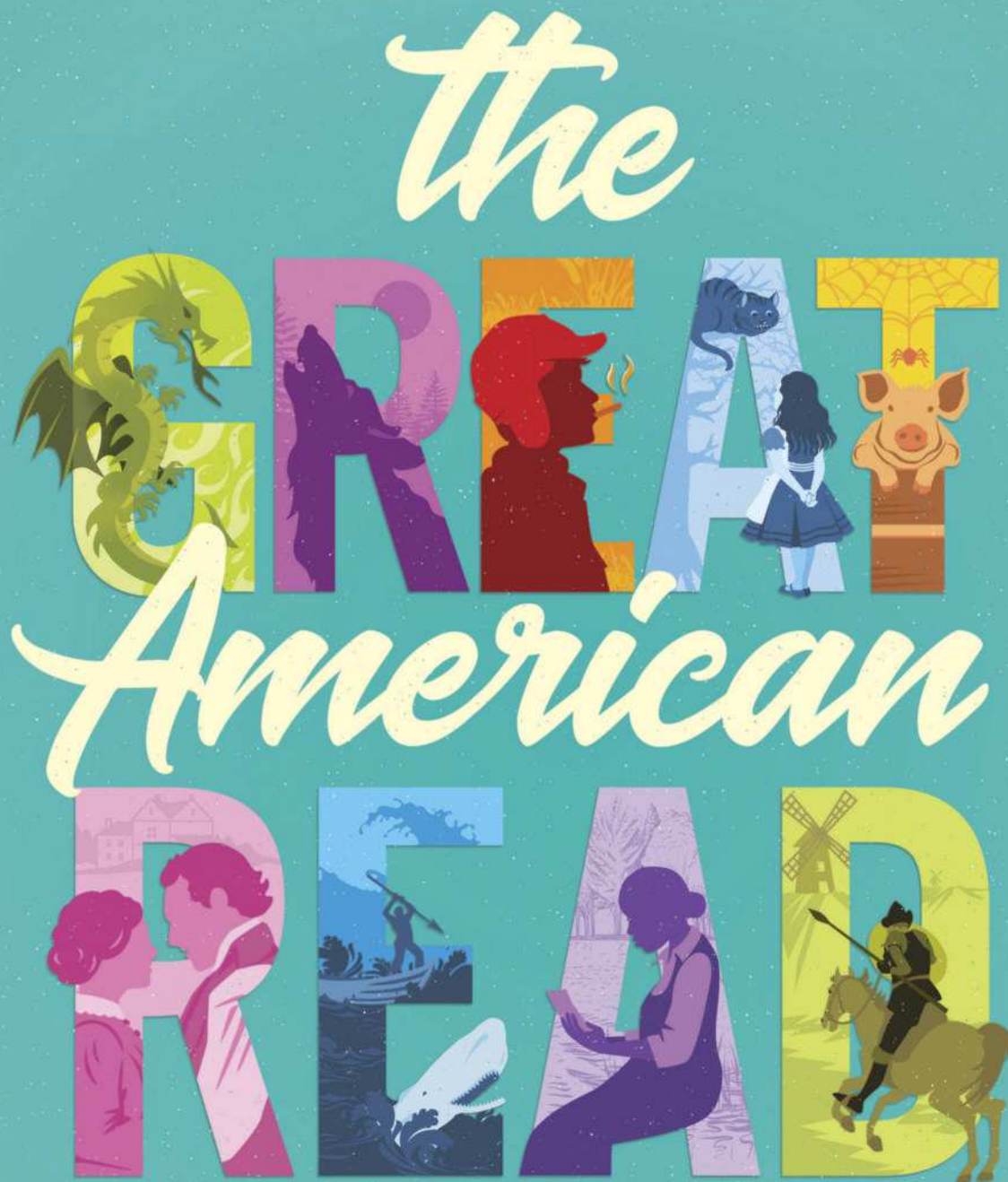
The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd—my first-ever "favorite" and the only book I have ever reread. It's a powerful story of women, family, race, and love.



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Contributors

Good Vibrations

The creative minds behind this issue have mastered the art of keeping their cup half full.



Ashley Thomas,
Assistant to the editor in chief

THE QUESTION, PAGE 14

The person who can always put a smile on my face is...my mom. She reminds me to stop taking myself so seriously. **These days I'm grateful for...**beach weather. For a while there, I thought winter would never end and our new normal would be snowstorms in August. I lost hope somewhere around nor'easter number four.



Elizabeth Gilbert,
Writer

"BECOME THE THING," PAGE 87
One way to maximize happiness is by...going to a local diner once a week all alone and sitting in a window seat in the morning sun, quietly reading a book over a breakfast of bacon and eggs. You'll walk away feeling like you just spent a long weekend at a spa. **These days I'm grateful for...**the depth, humor, loyalty, and wisdom of my female friends. They always bring me to a place of solace and stability.



Patricia Heaton,
Actress

"FOOD OF DREAMS," PAGE 112

One way to maximize happiness is by...counting your blessings. Gratitude for the smallest thing can inform your attitude about the bigger things. **A song that will instantly turn my day around is...**anything sung by Ethel Merman. Her voice is so outrageous, so glorious, so unexpected!



John Hodgman,
Actor

"GET CARRIED AWAY,"
PAGE 98

The people who can always put a smile on my face are...my wife, our daughter, our son, and Oprah Winfrey. It's a four-way tie! **A song that will instantly turn my day around is...**"Gold Purple Orange" by Jean Grae and Quelle Chris. They are two of the funniest, strangest, loveliest minds in rap music.

Laurie Santos, Professor of psychology

"WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU HAPPY?," PAGE 80

One way to maximize happiness is by...staying in the present moment. We're often thinking about stuff that's not in the here and now, and that wandering of the mind makes us more stressed. **These days I'm grateful for...**my students at Yale University. They teach and challenge me every day.

GILBERT: TIMOTHY GREENFIELD-SANDERS; THOMAS: ARIELLE BAKER; HEATON: KATE ROMERO; HODGMAN: MOLLYHALEY.COM; SANTOS: MIKE MARSLAND.



THE MOST O-MAZING CRUISES AT SEA

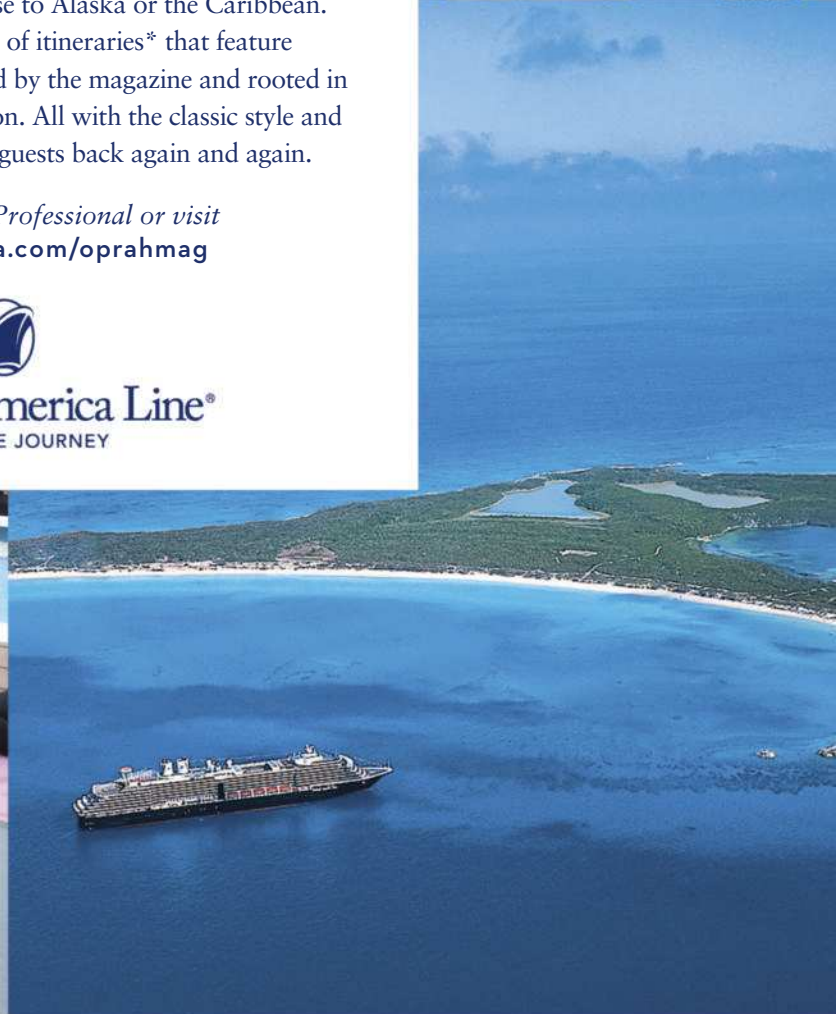
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Behind the Scenes

EARTHLY DELIGHTS

FOR OUR JULY cover shoot, we headed to Oprah's literal happy place: her garden in Maui, which looks out on a mountain range with trees galore. There she soaked up the sunshine and, with a sweep of her Brunello Cucinelli ball skirt, sat down to admire her flowers. "If this isn't heaven, I don't know what is," Oprah said. "I could stay out here forever." Since forever wasn't a practical option, she did the next-best thing by picking a few perfect hydrangeas to bring inside. "I just want to take a little of this bliss with me." —PAMELA EDWARDS CHRISTIANI



Sittin' pretty in her Maui flower garden in a comfy cotton blouse, a ball skirt, and flats (in this case, a pair of Keds).

MOOD BOOSTERS

A few things that make Oprah's day.



I love a maxiskirt, especially one that moves.
SKIRT, \$375; zimmermann.com

I live in a jumpsuit—on a plane, out to lunch, you name it. This one is as soft as a pair of pajamas.
JUMPSUIT, \$198; leslunes.com



Oversize frames are my thing.
SUNGLASSES, \$460; celine.com

I adore pearls, like this lightweight classic with a little edge.
EARRINGS, \$145; marymacgill.com



I've smelled a lot of candles, but this one—with mint, cypress, and basil—made me swoon.
CANDLE, Mad et Len, \$110; millsparmacy.com



There are few things nicer than a loose linen sweater in the summer.
SWEATER, By Malene Birger, \$395; net-a-porter.com

You've gotta love a gold sandal with arch support.
LEATHER SLIDE, FitFlop x Aeffe Loosh Luxe, \$250; fitflop.com



These sweats have hidden pockets, a slim leg, and just the right amount of stretch.
PANTS, \$170; bleusalt.com



I can throw everything in here!
TOTE, Ink & Alloy, \$90; inkalloy.com

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The Question



How would you spend your perfect day?



At a spa with my mom and five sisters. We're spread across the country and haven't spent a day together in years. I'd love to reconnect with them.

JULIANA O'HARE
Reno, Nevada

TRAVELING WITH MY HUSBAND, WHO HAS GIVEN ME THE WORLD IN OUR 13 YEARS OF MARRIAGE. EVERY TRIP WE TAKE IS FULL OF ADVENTURE AND MEMORIES THAT WILL LAST US A LIFETIME.

KRISTINA ALLIS
Gerrardstown, West Virginia

Riding my thoroughbred, Birdie, a former racehorse. I returned to my passion after 30 years and gave us both a second chance.

SUSAN HOVDESVEN
Southampton, New York



ON THE ROAD WITH MY NIECES AND NEPHEWS. EVERYONE WOULD PICK A SONG AND WE'D ALL SING! WE'D HAVE A BITE TO EAT AND JUST TALK. I DON'T HAVE KIDS OF MY OWN, BUT THANKS TO THE SIX OF THEM, I FEEL TRULY BLESSED.

COLLEEN LONG
Marco Island, Florida

I'd start by taking a short bike ride to enjoy my outdoor-friendly city. The afternoon would be spent on the river, and in the evening I'd have a picnic with friends at the local outdoor Shakespeare festival.

PAM ROOT
Boise, Idaho

I'm an introvert, so my perfect day would involve unplugging from everything. I would get up early to have my morning tea, then go to the lake to enjoy my surroundings, catch up on my favorite books, and write in my journal.

LINDY LEWIS
Toronto



MEETING REESE WITHERSPOON! WE'D GO TO LUNCH IN NASHVILLE AND SHOP AT HER STORE, THEN TAKE SELFIES AND SEND THEM TO OPRAH TO SAY, "WE MISSED YOU, GIRLFRIEND!"

KELLY O'BANION
Marion, Indiana



Our Next Question

What's something you've radically changed your opinion about?

Tell us at oprah.com/question or email us at thequestion@hearst.com (include your full name, city, and state). Your response could be featured in our September issue.

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Let's Talk!



STANDING O

In May, you applauded two Broadway stars while finding common ground and a look to love.



KID TESTED
Oprah's black-and-white cover inspired Houston second grader Zahnari Woods to re-create the crisp and cool look.

LEAD THE CHARGE

In her "What I Know for Sure" column, Oprah asked readers to come together for gun control. You approved.

"This is so true. People are walking around without any care in their souls. All these senseless killings and disregard for human life have to stop!"

—@lifestylewithmelisamorgan



HE SAID, SHE SAID

When Oprah sat down with Tony and Pulitzer winner Lin-Manuel Miranda to discuss our divided times and how we can move forward ("This Is Us"), they got virtual praise.

"My heart was so happy when I saw them speaking. Two open hearts and thought-provoking minds. Thank you both for your work." —@saintcville

ROLE CALL

Before she made her Broadway debut as Hermione Granger in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, we spoke to Noma Dumezweni ("Under Her Spell") about the big shoes she had to fill. One of our followers could be the perfect understudy.



"I'm black and my name is Hermione. It's been a struggle to carry such an unusual name for 57 years. So I was thrilled to find it in the Harry Potter books, and it's an honor to have two phenomenal actresses play her!"

—@hermione_onie



ALL FOR ONE
MAY'S BIG QUESTION WAS ONE OF THE BIGGEST YET—AND YOU CAME BACK WITH INSPIRING ANSWERS.

"We all want to be safe, live healthy lives, and be treated as equals, regardless of our financial or phony societal statuses."

—@realdawnofthesouth

"The planet can survive without humans but humans can't survive without the planet."

—@sophieracheloconnor

"Beyoncé is the best to ever do it."

—@fly_thebook

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Here We Go!



PHOTOGRAPH BY *Ruven Afanador*

WHEN YOU PICTURE happiness, what do you see? A carefree life of nonstop glee, where nothing ever goes wrong and everything is rosy and joyful forever and ever? Or do you imagine an existence that's quiet and still, calm and centered? Do you picture a life not necessarily free of troubles, but one in which setbacks can be dealt with because your heart is full and your focus is on what truly matters?

If you guessed that we're more interested in *that* variety of happiness than the one in which you run around beaming like someone in a toothpaste ad, you'd be correct. And if that kind of peaceful, easy feeling is what you're looking for, too, you're in luck: This month we're exploring exactly what it takes to achieve it, with help from a Yale professor whose class on happiness has been the university's most popular course ever (page 80). Join us as we lift our spirits, then try the exercises yourself—I can promise you the experience will be eye-opening.

Speaking of eye-opening, don't miss the fabulous array of new books in our annual summer reading guide: This year we're diving into stories set across America (page 98). Top it all off with a homemade ice cream sandwich—the yummy starts on page 92—and you might just have the perfect recipe for your own version of happiness.

Read on!

Opal



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Live Your Best Life

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*“I have to calm down a bit.
Or else I’ll burst with happiness.”*

—TOVE JANSSON, MOOMIN SUMMER MADNESS

Full Circle
Hit your target of a perfect beach day with this **pom-pommed towel** (a.k.a. summer in terry-cloth form). Its shape means you can rotate your body instead of your towel as the sun does its thing. (bando.com)



Ready, Set, Glue!
On *Making It*, NBC's new competition series (July 31), contestants crochet and papier-mâché their way through weekly DIY challenges with the hope of being **crowned Master Maker**. Your hosts: craft-loving Amy Poehler and Nick Offerman. Who knew?

Small Prints
Once upon a time, a kiosk dreamed of delivering something more exciting than tickets. Then one day her wish came true: She became a Short Edition dispenser, **printing free stories and poems** on receipt-like strips. Today 30-plus machines are living happily ever after all across the land. (short-edition.com for locations)

Scents of Adventure
Embrace the outdoors indoors with candles **inspired by 13 national parks** (a blend including vetiver and pine for Yellowstone, sea salt and wood for Acadia). Next-best thing to a campfire. (goodandwellsupplyco.com)

The Gratitude Meter

BY Melissa Goldberg

Natural Resource
If you can't tell a Japanese cherry tree from a dogwood, it may be time to find Seek. The free app uses image recognition technology to **identify more than 20,000 wild species** of plants, animals, and insects when you photograph them. We give it two green thumbs up.

CREATURE COMFORTS

RAISING THE RUFF

Modern design has gone to the dogs, with canine casas that protect your pet from the elements without sacrificing the element of style. Here, three houses fit for a Cavalier King Charles spaniel. —M.G.



Designer Dog Houses has four spiffy styles—including the Hillside Contemporary with cedar siding and the Coastal Cottage (above) with rubber roofing. (designer-dog-houses.com)

Easy-to-clean tile floors? Check. Wireless speakers? Yep. A personalized license plate that reads BAD 2 THE BONE? You bet. The miniature customizable campers from Straight Line Designs are souped-up non-road warriors. (straightlinedesigns.com)



If you're sans backyard, check out Modular Dog. Its specialty: wooden towers meant for indoor use, with a compact vertical design and adjustable legs, in case your floor is slightly warped. (modulardog.com)

TOWELLIFESTYLE IMAGE: JESS OF @ADYFLASHBACK. MAKING IT: NBCUNIVERSAL MEDIA, LLC. SHORT EDITION: OLIVIER ALEXANDRE. CANDLES: DANIELLE OCCHIOGROSSO DALY. IPHONE: SHUTTERSTOCK. SEEK APP SCREENSHOT: KEN-CHIUEDA/JOELLE BELMONTE. POPPIES: GETTY IMAGES. CREATURE COMFORTS, FROM LEFT: KELLY ERICKSON, MIKE WAKEFIELD, HECTOR GARCIA.

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TAKE NOTE

The Man Show

Young Jean Lee finds the drama in white guys.

GIVE YOUNG JEAN LEE a button and she will push it. Her 2009 play, *The Shipment*, was a send-up of black stereotypes à la *Chappelle's Show*; 2011's *Untitled Feminist Show* was a dialogue-free burlesque featuring a naked female cast skewering gender tropes. While Lee's experimental gusto has won her accolades (including a Guggenheim Fellowship and two Obie Awards), her work hasn't exactly been Sunday matinee material—until now. When her latest, *Straight White Men*, premieres July 23, Lee will become the first Asian American female playwright ever produced on Broadway.

A naturalistic piece starring Armie Hammer, the play centers on three adult sons spending Christmas Eve with their dad. But rather than parody the suddenly much-maligned demographic, *Straight White Men* explores the perils of privilege, ultimately asking: What happens when a person with every advantage doesn't achieve what he's expected to? "Straight white men are struggling right now," says Lee, 44. "They used to not be put in a box. They used to just be people. Now they're an identity category—with stereotypes. They're experiencing something the rest of us have felt for a long time."

But lest it seem that Lee has gone mainstream, the show opens with hip-hop blaring and gender-nonconforming people of color as emcees (called Persons in Charge in the script), mock-speechifying about difference and discomfort. That edgy framing makes one thing clear: It's storytellers like Lee who will help the Great White Way find a new way forward.

—MICHELLE HART

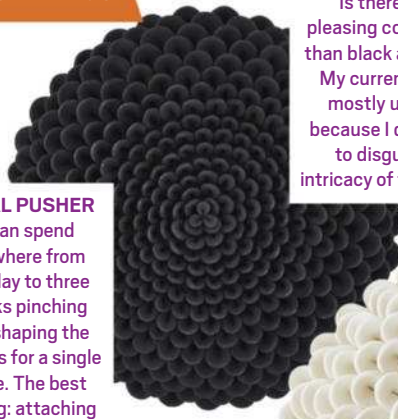
WOMEN WHO MAKE BEAUTIFUL THINGS

PETAL PUSHER

"I can spend anywhere from one day to three weeks pinching and shaping the flowers for a single piece. The best feeling: attaching that very last one!"



BYE-BYE, DYE
"Is there a more pleasing combination than black and white? My current work is mostly unglazed because I don't want to disguise the intricacy of the petals."



"Flowers offer endless patterns and possibilities, so I don't think I'll ever make a collection of dogs or cats. Flowers are what I do."

STRONG ROOTS

"I was raised in South Africa, and the women in my mother's family were extraordinary gardeners. When I make my pieces, I feel like I'm channeling those matriarchal figures."

THE PERKS OF MAKING A Wallflower

Garden-variety? Not **Vanessa Hogge's** blooms. The London ceramist sculpts wall pieces and vases out of hundreds of hand-molded porcelain petals. We asked Hogge about her decorative dahlias, daisies, and more. —M.G.



ONE TO WATCH



YES, WE'LL BE YOURS

Though Fred Rogers presided over a land of make-believe, his show, *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, helped generations of kids navigate the real world. The documentary *Won't You Be My Neighbor?* (June 8) chronicles Rogers' quest to create TV that transcended. With simple sets and puppets, the cardigan-clad minister helped viewers cope with feelings about everything from war to the bathtub drain. When Rogers spoke at a 1969 Senate hearing to defend funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, instead of crunching numbers, he made a heartfelt speech. Subcommittee chairman John Pastore got "goose bumps"; CPB got to keep its funding. Rogers never forgot that kids were people—or that every person was once a kid. —M.G.

LEE: GUZMAN FOR FOURELEVEN.AGENCY; CERAMICS: YESHEN YENEMA (4); FLOWER: VANESSA HOGGE; HOGGE: POLLY RUSYN; ROGERS: THE FRED ROGERS COMPANY.

MY
BEST
LIFE

Patricia Clarkson

▶ The boldly versatile actress, who costars in HBO's moody thriller *Sharp Objects* (July 8), on Southern charm and her go-to candy.

BEST CONVERSATION STARTER

I turn to the fact that I was born and raised in New Orleans. People have usually been to the city or want to visit. And sometimes they pick up on my slight Southern accent, and then I can tell them I'm from there. Either way, it gives me a chance to tout my beautiful hometown.

BEST SUMMER TIME-PASSER

Sitting in New York City's Washington Square Park with my rescue dog, Isadora Duncan. We people-watch together.

BEST LITTLE-KNOWN FACT

I'm a really good archer. Growing up, I went to summer camp for ten years. I was never good at volleyball or tennis, but it turns out I could use a bow and arrow. Isn't that crazy?

BEST ADVICE

My mom always said, "Patty, rise above." It's about having great confidence. If someone is treating you badly, think of yourself as better than that bad situation.

BEST CURSE WORD

I like them all: *shit, fuck, damn*. Can I even say that in *O* magazine?

—AS TOLD TO JOSEPH ZAMBRANO

“

BEST GUILTY PLEASURE

“I love every flavor of licorice. But I don't keep any in my house because I want to look good on red carpets!”

Live Your Best Life

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO Gayle

SIP

I wouldn't normally recommend a restaurant solely for the beverages, but Home Sweet Harlem, an American bistro in New York City, is a delicious exception. Owner Donna Lewis has perfected a fresh concoction made with pineapple, mint, lemon juice, and fresh ginger. When you visit, just pair a tall glass with some fried chicken and waffles—and tell Donna I sent you!



WATCH

I've seen *Mamma Mia!* on stage and at the movies, so there's no way I'm missing the film's sequel, *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again* (July 20). Your favorite cast members, including Colin Firth and Pierce Brosnan, are back, along with a new face or two (hi, Cher!). This time Sophie (played by Amanda Seyfried) is the one expecting—and discovering she has more in common with her mom (the matchless Meryl Streep) than she thought. Throw in spectacular Greek vistas and ABBA songs that didn't make it into the original, and you've got yourself a little vacation.



Follow Gayle on Instagram and Twitter @GayleKing.



GO

Any Broadway musical that encourages you to sing and dance is my kind of show. That's exactly what I did during *Summer: The Donna Summer Musical*. The disco queen's story is brought to life with three different actresses embodying her at three different life stages. You'll of course hear Donna's hits, but you'll also learn about the physical and emotional abuse she suffered while building her career. If there's one thing this icon taught us, it's that you need to work hard for the money—and she definitely did.

TUNE IN

I really try not to add more dramas to my long list of must-see television, but every year HBO gets me to break my rule. *Succession* is about a media company owned by the dysfunctional Roy family. The past-his-prime Logan doesn't want to give up the throne, but his four children (that's his oldest, Kendall, at right) are more than ready to take over. I'll be tuning in Sunday nights to watch the fireworks. But HBO, please let me finish the first season before releasing another hit!



LISTEN

I've always told Drake he's not like the other kids in the class. His new album, *Scorpion*, proves I'm right. The first single, "God's Plan," went number one when it dropped—and was only knocked out by (wait for it) his second single, "Nice for What." In other words, Drake's the rare artist who outperforms even himself. Given the rapper-crooner's track record, I bet he'll have more chart toppers this year.



KING: JOSEPH ZAMBRANO; SUMMER: JACK MITCHELL / GETTY IMAGES; SUCCESSION: CRAIG BLANKENHORN/HBO; DRAKE: KEVIN MAZUR / GETTY IMAGES FOR COACHELLA; STREEP: JONATHAN PRIME/UNIVERSAL PICTURES; LEMONADE: KHALIF COOMBS AND JAY AMIN.

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WINEMAKERS



SELECTION

CONNECTIONS

THE OTHER MOTHER

Sarah Sentilles on what to expect when you're expectant.

SOMETIMES the woman in the photograph turns her back to the camera. Sometimes she kneels behind a couch or a chair. Sometimes her face is scratched out or blurred or burned or cut off by the frame. Sometimes her entire body is covered by black cloth or patterned fabric or a rug.

The images—1,002 in all, shot during the 19th and early 20th centuries—were collected over a decade ago by the artist Linda Fregni Nagler for her 2013 book, *The Hidden Mother*, an homage to an accident of technology. When cameras were still new, they had excruciatingly long exposure times; photographing a child required someone to hold the portrait's subject still. That someone was often the child's mother. In many of these images, all the viewer can see of the mother is her hand, emerging from under a blanket or from some unseen part of the room. The pictures haunt me. They have no caption, no title, no date. The viewer has to turn to the back to find any information at all, and there she will read descriptions like this: *7.5 x 6.5 cm, dark, gem size, ink stain, red cheeks, scratched tintype*. To see what's pictured, you must get close, intimate. Nagler's book of images

comes to seem like a family album, though one that belongs to strangers.

Family albums and strangers are on my mind lately. My husband, Eric, and I were recently certified as foster parents. In the foster care system, we are designated "nonrelative care providers," also known as "stranger care." We are awaiting a call that will tell us there is a child in need of a home. Our phone will ring, and we will become parents, maybe for a few days, maybe forever.

For some, part of preparing to welcome a child includes creating a photo album social workers can share to ready her for her new home. "Photograph your kitchen table," our social worker said. *This is where you will eat.* "Photograph the child's bedroom." *This is where you will sleep.* "Photograph the local park." *This is where you will play.* "Photograph yourselves doing things you like to do." *These are the strangers who will take care of you.* The handout she gave us recommended buying glitter and glue, making it fun.

Nagler's work speaks to me as a potential adoptive parent—feeling "pregnant," though no one sees me that way. A woman I know who adopted her daughters told me about registering for a baby shower that her friends threw while she waited for



We are awaiting a call that will tell us there is a child in need of a home. Our phone will ring, and we will become parents, maybe for a few days, maybe forever.

a child to arrive. The red-vested salesperson held a clipboard. He looked at my friend's nonpregnant body, looked at his clipboard, looked back at her body.

"Are you sure this shower is for you?" he asked.

"Yes," she said.

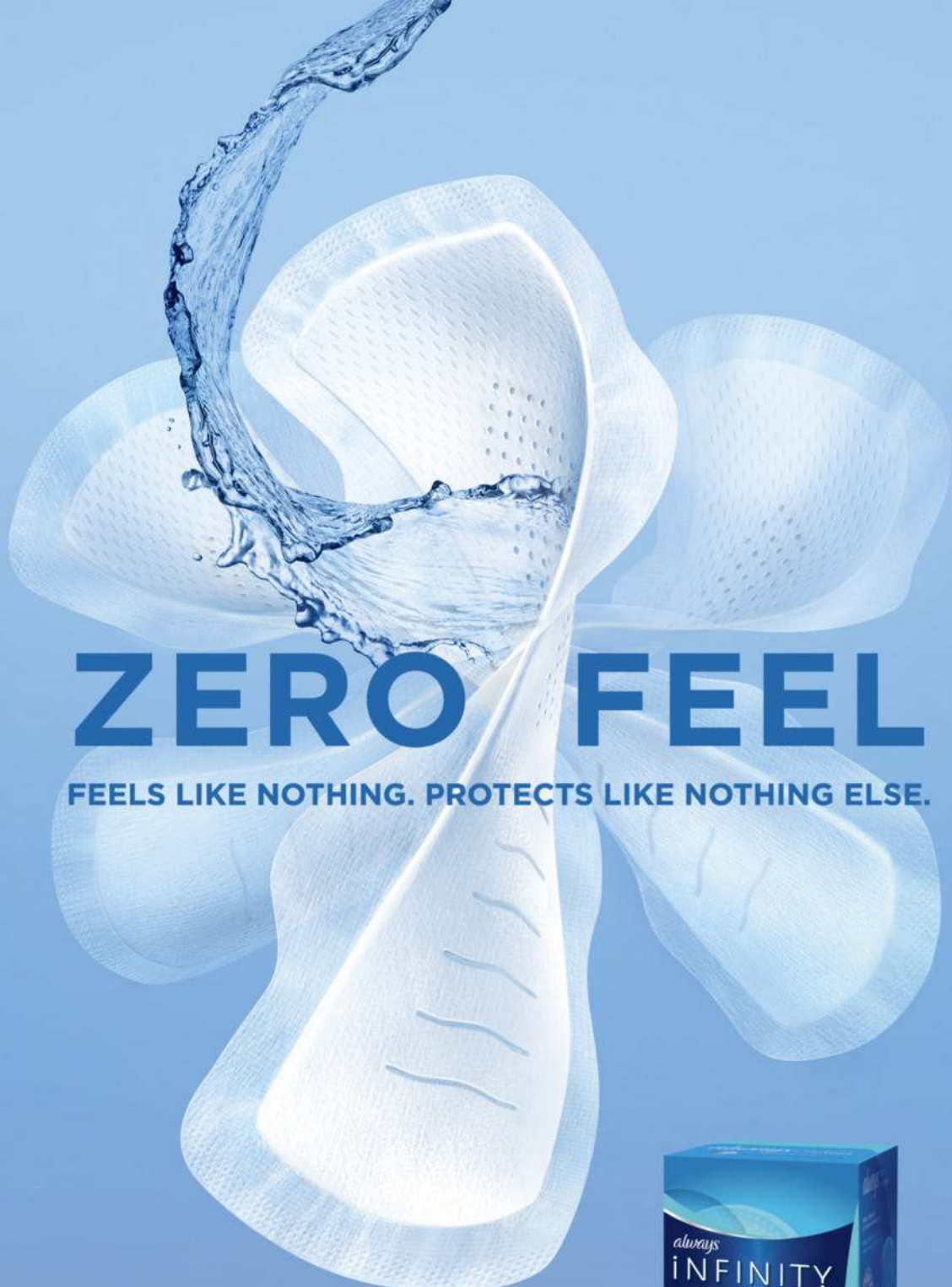
"Due date?" he asked.

"I don't have one," she said.

"I can't register you without a due date," he said, looking skeptical.

At home, we've set up a room with a crib, a bed, a closet full of clothes, a shelf lined with picture books, just waiting for our future child to enter the frame. But at the moment when I am revealed as a mother, the child's biological mother will become a hidden one, her child taken away, whether by force or choice.

In the classes Eric and I are required to take, we are reminded of the importance of maintaining relationships with the child's biological parents. "Put a photo of the biological mother on the bedside table," we're told. "Make it part



ZERO FEEL

FEELS LIKE NOTHING. PROTECTS LIKE NOTHING ELSE.



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GROOVES



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LEAK-FREE



EXTREME WICKING
FLEXFOAM



Rewrite the Rules
always

SALMON LIKE YOURS BUT MADE FOR HER



100% natural.
100% recognizable.

Serve it any way she likes.



of the nighttime routine to kiss mama's picture goodnight."

When friends who have babies or toddlers visit, they bring video monitors so they can watch their kids sleep, see when they wake from a nap or in the night. A friend from San Francisco told me that once, after putting her child to bed, she plugged in her video monitor, but on the screen, instead of her own 2-year-old, someone else's child appeared. So many monitors in that city. Signals get crossed.

When I was growing up, we didn't have video monitors. You had to listen for a baby's cry. There were hours when kids weren't being watched, when we were out of view. We were decades from Facebook. No constant stream of shared pictures uploaded by parents. In some ways, being a foster parent returns you to a time before social media, when pictures were taken with just a few viewers in mind.

Our social workers told us we're not allowed to post any images of foster kids on social media. "But that doesn't mean you shouldn't take photographs when the child is living with you," one said. "You need to take pictures of significant life events. Birthdays. Soccer games. Graduation. School plays. Because the child's biological parents will miss those events, and they'll want to see them."

Family photos line the staircase to our basement—images of my great-grandparents and me smelling roses, of Eric's family gathered at a cottage on a lake, of my grandfather as a young boy driving a cart pulled by a goat, of our four nephews. There are also trees and pets and



The author and her husband, Eric, on their 13th wedding anniversary in Idaho.

mountains and rivers. I've left empty spaces on that wall, and one day our child's picture will hang there, and our child's biological parents' pictures, too, and maybe their parents' pictures and their parents' and theirs. I will not hide any of the bodies that made our child.

I could become a mother tomorrow or the day after or next month or next year. "Do you have kids?" people ask me almost every day. "No," I say, not wanting to explain, keeping myself hidden because, really, it's an unimaginative question, one full of assumptions about what family means, about who counts as kin, and it's a hard question for anyone with a complicated relationship to family-making, for those of us who've experienced miscarriage or failed adoptions or the death of a child, for those of us estranged or embattled or in grief. It's a question I refuse to ask. "Tell me about your family," I say instead, because I know belonging comes in all shapes and sizes, visible and invisible, hidden and made, chosen and found.

SARAH SENTILLES is the author of, most recently, *Draw Your Weapons*.

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PART 3

Drawing STRENGTH

▶ Aminah Akram has made real progress toward setting healthy boundaries. In her final session with O's **Martha Beck**, she learns how to listen to her heart.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY John Ritter

“
When
people try to
pull you
back into
old patterns,
it takes
a lot of effort
to resist.”

SINGLE MOM Aminah Akram longs to find a partner—but in her previous session with O life coach Martha Beck, the 48-year-old confessed that romance isn't the only kind of love she's been missing. Aminah's parents were mostly absent while she was growing up, leaving her to be raised by her grandmother, who “wasn't a ‘give me a hug’ kind of person.” Martha told her client that they were onto something important: Because Aminah never got the affection she needed as a child, she learned to give without expecting anything in return. Now she's continuing that behavior as an adult, endlessly caring for her kids, sisters, and mother—and depleting herself in the process. To break the pattern, Martha advised, Aminah has to finally give the kid inside the attention she deserves; when that little girl learns she's worthy of love, adult Aminah will attract the relationship of her dreams. Let's check in as Aminah and Martha start their last session.

Martha Beck: Hi, Aminah! You've been on my mind a lot since we talked. Tell me what's happening.

Aminah Akram: Well, I've started seeing a therapist.

MB: That's amazing!

AA: I also told my mom I don't think we should live together anymore. There was anger at first, but she finally said, “Okay, if that's what you want to do.”

MB: Wow! Separating from your mother is the ultimate boundary setting.

AA: Of course, my sisters want to know how I'll find a babysitter for my daughter.

MB: You're breaking the family rules and getting pushback.

AA: I am, but I don't care anymore.

MB: You seem mellow. But also tired.

AA: Yeah, this is my day off, so I slept in.

MB: You're experiencing what a friend of mine calls “transformational tension.” After you've spent a long time contemplating change, taking action is exhilarating. But when people try to pull you back into old patterns, it takes a lot of effort to resist. That may be tiring you out.

AA: It is exhausting when they say things that make me second-guess myself, like “Can you afford it?”

MB: This is what people-pleasers face when they set boundaries. Everybody who's benefited from your accommodating ways starts scrambling to reestablish the old rules. If they can't get you with guilt, they'll try fear—threatening conflict or telling you your decision is going to have horrible consequences.

AA: Yes, first it was guilt. “What's Mom going to do?” And then when they asked me about money, I felt the fear. But I have to live my life the way I want. I've also been reading *Homecoming*, the John Bradshaw book you told me about.

MB: You really do your homework!

AA: It's made me realize that the things I went through as a kid weren't my fault.

MB: You're feeling compassion for that little girl inside you, which is how you will ultimately begin to heal. We talked about giving her the chance to speak and be heard. Since this is our final session, it might be useful for the two of us to walk through that together.

AA: Sure, let's try it.

MB: When you think about feeling lonely as a child, does a particular scene come up?

AA: I can't pinpoint anything. I just always felt like I was

lacking something—that I didn’t dress like the other kids or have what they had.

MB: And you couldn’t pour your heart out to your mother. It’s probably hard to even imagine what a caring parent might have said to you.

AA: Right. When you don’t have it, you don’t know what you’re missing.

MB: Let’s play a little game. Say you’re 10 years old, feeling horrible, and you come home from school. I’ll be a mother who’s really tuned in to her child, okay?

AA: Okay.

MB: So, honey, how was your day?

AA: Mom, I felt strange because I was at lunch with my friends, but I felt like I was somewhere I wasn’t supposed to be. I didn’t belong, and it didn’t feel good.

MB: That sounds terrible. Come sit and tell me more. Tell me everything.

AA: [Long pause] I—I’m sorry.

[Tearily] I don’t know what to say.

MB: Sweetheart, it’s okay. You’re doing so well. It’s horrible to feel different, and of course you feel awful. Let it out. I’m right here.

AA: I’m sorry. I don’t like talking about when I was younger.

MB: You don’t need to apologize.

When you’re hurt, you get to cry.

Now you’re safe enough to replay those painful moments and see how it feels to be nurtured. Say to that little girl, “Tell me everything you’re feeling.” Then, “That must have been so painful. Tell me more. I’m not leaving you.” Then, “Anyone who went through that would feel the same way. It was really hard.” Give yourself the time. Say, “Here, let’s put a blanket around you.”

AA: It’s just someone to hold me, more than talking.

MB: I hear you. I was never nurtured that way either, so I had to imagine it for myself. When my kids were little, I used to sit in the chair where I rocked them and think, *How would a loving mother talk to me?* I’d cry and

cry. And you know what happened? I wound up befriending a woman just like the mother I’d imagined.

When you can be a loving presence for yourself, you will draw more love into your life. I also imagine that loving presence as God. I don’t know what your beliefs are.

AA: Yes, I believe in God.

MB: I would imagine that force in the room with its arms around me, and I started having very profound spiritual experiences. Whatever you vividly imagine from deep inside your heart, you begin to create as if by magic.

AA: Do you think this is why I’m obsessed with drawing hearts?

MB: That’s your spirit writing you a message: *I love you, I love you, I love you.*

AA: But the hearts always have to be perfect.

MB: What other kind of heart would a God force draw? Think about that idea, a God force in your unconscious mind sending you messages. What does that feel like in your body?

AA: It’s a little click inside my chest.

MB: That’s your sense of truth—in body, heart, mind, and spirit.

AA: It’s like I’ve been in a lie forever.

I’ve always felt that I’m supposed to be living a different life.

MB: What would that life be like?

AA: I want to be on the beach, not bogged down by mental issues, nobody stressing me out.

MB: Keep going.

AA: I’d own a restaurant, a little hut, just to survive.

MB: This is a fantasy, so you don’t have to worry about survival.

What would it feel like if you didn’t have to do anything at all?

AA: I’d feel like a loser.

MB: Even in your fantasy, you can’t let yourself imagine having no job.

If I flew you to the beach right now, you’d still be anxious because you’d be yelling at yourself to get busy.

Instead of that voice of fear, try letting in the voice of truth—the voice



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of truth.

of God. Imagine you’re sitting on the beach and you start thinking, *I’m so lazy*. What does God say?

AA: “No, you’re not. You’re a beautiful human being.”

MB: Think of that verse from the book of Matthew: “Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin.” But God takes care of them anyway. How, then, will he not care for you? You’ve been listening to that fearful voice screaming that you have to do more, more, more, because you’re never enough. But another part of you is sending hearts and trying to tell you there’s a different way of being.

That part is pure love, and it’s always with you. You’ve come such a long way. You’re going to make a wonderful life for yourself.

AA: I hope so. Martha, this is the best thing that’s happened to me in a long time—or ever.

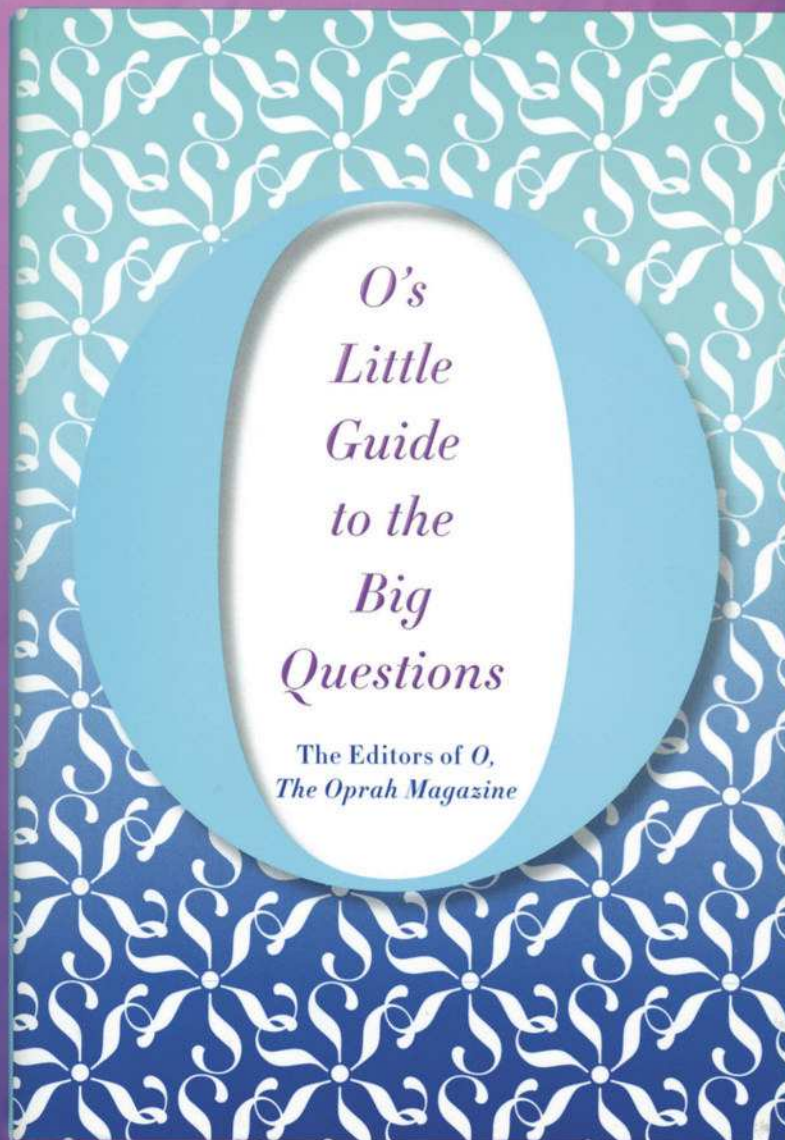
MB: It’s you finding you. You just have to step into your own miracle.

MARTHA BECK is the author of, most recently, *Diana, Herself: An Allegory of Awakening*.



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—Oprah Winfrey



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DEAR LISA

To Engage, or Not to Engage?

Dear Lisa,
My fiancé and I moved in together last year and plan to marry this December. To make our honeymoon truly memorable, I've suggested we "revirginize" by practicing abstinence for the six months before our wedding. Am I crazy?

—SUZANNE, MARYLAND

Dear Madonna,

Couple of things: You can be touched for the very first time only *once*. Also, I'm pretty sure revirginization is not a thing. And those quibbles aside, you've got your entire married lives not to have sex together—why jump the gun? Sorry, just kidding (sort of).

Let me explain the great circle of married sex: In the beginning, he'll find your mouth in the dark, and you'll go through the next day with more goofy joy than anyone functioning on five hours of sleep has a right to. A few months later, you'll fight about whether to get the chrome or the brushed-nickel soap dish, but the argument melts away when he takes it upon himself to empty the dishwasher and agrees to go look at goldendoodle puppies because goldendoodles are great with babies—not that you plan on having babies anytime soon. Eleven months later, you have a baby. Ella is colicky; the dog is jealous. The doctor says sex can resume after six weeks, but you tell your husband she said three months—minimum. Time marches on. Sex is amazing, meaning you're literally amazed you actually made it happen before dropping Ella at daycare. Enter baby 2. Nathaniel refuses to nurse, Ella refuses to nap, the dog is appalled. When the choice is Colbert or sex, Colbert wins. The kids get older, the dog gets incontinent—sex is sporadic and



ILLUSTRATION BY Brett Ryder

uninspired. Then, one day, Ella is studying quadratic trinomials at MIT, Nate is off getting something pierced, your husband takes it upon himself to empty the dishwasher, and boom! It turns out you're still crazy (about each other) after all these years.

So what have we learned today? Well, first of all, whoever picked the brushed-nickel soap dish was wrong. Second, kids get stuff pierced—ignore it. Third, I love a designer dog as much as the next advice columnist, but so many wonderful animals are hurting; consider a rescue next time. Finally, believe me, the start of your life as a married couple will be meaningful regardless of what happens or doesn't happen prior to it. Do not put off until tomorrow what you can do today and for the six months leading up to your wedding.

Dear Lisa,

I'm fairly new to a company where every summer, my boss invites all 19 employees to a weekend at his lake house. He insists it's not about work; he just wants to express his gratitude and show us a good time. I have three young kids and really don't want to leave them. But in the world of office politics, am I making a mistake? —SONDRA, ARKANSAS

Gainfully employed Sondra,

You're asking a woman who has attended only one office Christmas party in her meteoric rise to the middle. So I say if your boss seems sincere about simply wanting you to enjoy yourself, and you enjoy yourself by not watching Loretta from human resources play Frisbee in her tankini, then write a lovely note thanking him for his generous gesture and skip it. But if you have even the slightest sense that your absence could come back to bite you, then chalk this one summer weekend up to the cost of doing business (not to mention having health insurance for those three kids), err on the side of caution, and prepare to line up for your shower with the folks from accounting.

Dear Lisa,

My mother-in-law is 96 and in very poor health that will only get worse. My husband and his two sisters keep dragging her to different doctors who send her for more invasive tests. She's said she's had enough, but nobody is listening. Should I stay out of it?

—ROSA, CALIFORNIA

Dear Rosa,

This isn't about you or her children—it's about everyone becoming selfless advocates for a person who's tired of all the poking, prodding, and schlepping. Find an excellent geriatrician, someone who is specifically trained to treat elderly patients with numerous medical issues and understands how they influence physical and emotional health. Suggest an appointment at which everyone can have an honest conversation about how your mother-in-law wants to spend her remaining time and what the family can do to support her goals. Let the doctor do the heavy lifting here; it's not for you to take charge. And if someone points out that you're not a blood relative, explain how perhaps this makes you a little more objective, that you're still part of the family, and that love is love. Meantime, whenever possible, let your mother-in-law know you respect her choices, and that she has the right to live out her life any way she pleases.

LISA KOGAN is O's writer at large and the author of *Someone Will Be with You*. Shortly: Notes from a Perfectly Imperfect Life. To ask Lisa a question, email asklisa@hearst.com.



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The List

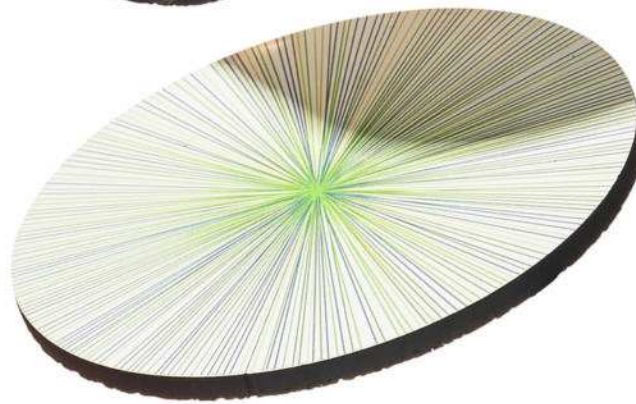


To Protect and Serve

You know how they say a good man is hard to find? Well, try tracking down really terrific coasters! These have a starburst design by Amanda Weitzman that's silk-screened onto wood, backed in cork, and finished in acrylic—and they're a source of income for artisans in the Southeast.

(Lines coasters, originally \$10 each, now 20 percent off with code OPRAH; tischnewyork.com)

A few
all-American
things we think
are just great!

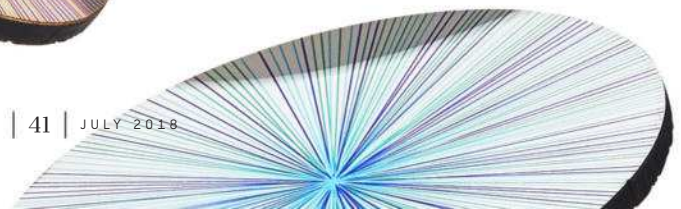


PROP STYLING: MEGUMI EMOTO, SOFT GOODS STYLING: MIAKO KATOHI, FOOD STYLING: HEATHER MELDROM.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
Gregor Halenda



Tune in to ABC's *The View* to see *O* creative director Adam Glassman reveal special savings from The *O* List on "View Your Deal."





Dining Alfresco

The little red roof keeps seeds from getting rained on, making this the feeder birds will flock to. Note: It does not take reservations, credit cards, or squirrels. **(Bistro bird feeder in Limited Edition Primary, originally \$225, now 20 percent off with code OPRAH; jschatz.com)**



The Way You Wear Your Hat

The little details on millinery marvel Tracy Watt's raffia straw fedoras are done by hand and on vintage machinery in a Brooklyn factory built in the 1800s. Choose pom-pom, ribbon, or cord trim—all are guaranteed to turn heads. **(Hitch fedoras, originally \$145 each, now 20 percent off with code OPRAH; tracywatts.com)**



Stop! In the Name of Love

Designer Jennifer Fisher has pledged 100 percent of the proceeds from this gold mini stop-sign-shaped pendant to Everytown for Gun Safety. What a classy way to make a difference. **(Mini stop pendant, \$400; jenniferfisherjewelry.com)**



Got You Covered

Designed and woven in Maine at one of the few remaining American textile mills, these cotton blankets have character and charm, and only get better with age. How many of us can say that? **(Newport blankets, originally from \$313 each, now 20 percent off with code OPRAH; brahmsmount.com)**



Dish Fulfillment

They ain't heavy, breakable handcrafted ceramics—they're resilient, dishwasher-safe, eco-friendly, mix-and-match melamine plates, and they're manufactured in Dallas! **(ThermoServ Cadence dipped-glaze melamine dinnerware, originally from \$30 for four pieces, now 20 percent off with code OPRAH2018; amazon.com)**



Lettuce Entertain You

Want your salad to be dressed for success? Start with a high-quality extra-virgin olive oil. This Brooklyn-made cruet with pour spout is arugula's best friend. **(Originally \$52 each, now 20 percent off with code OPRAH; rachaelpots.com)**





Spray-cation

Two best friends with a passion for travel decided to bottle scents informed by their favorite destinations. The result: cruelty-free unisex fine fragrances in Sequoia, Telluride, Mojave, and the Cape. Send us a postcard! **(Originally \$65 each, now 20 percent off with code OPRAH; abbottnyc.com)**



The Shirt Off His Back

Sleep in it, throw it over a swimsuit, wear it with jeans—these custom-embroidered pima cotton tops, made deep in the heart of Texas, provide the style of a boyfriend shirt without the hassle of an actual boyfriend. **(Shirts, originally \$165 each, now 30 percent off with code OPRAH; thepillowbar.com)**

We'll Drink to That

This collapsible and efficient home filtration system, with removable BPA-free plastic parts for easy cleaning, dramatically helps reduce the presence of bad stuff in our water. Don't make us list it all—suffice it to say, there's some really bad stuff out there. **(Clarity Xtreme water filtration system, \$119; available in July, kohler.com/wheretobuy for stores)**



Sherpa Chic

Imagine an ultrasophisticated canvas tote with red leather trim that goes gracefully from office to farmers' market. Supermodel Carolyn Murphy did, then collaborated with the Detroit design geniuses at Shinola to make it real. **(Lois totes, \$495 each; shinola.com)**



Rounding Home

The natural quartz, crafted and polished in Minnesota, is nonporous, scratch- and stain-resistant, and easy to pre-chill, which means this lazy Susan charcuterie and cheese board will be way too busy to be accused of laziness. **(Lazy Susan, originally \$175, and charcuterie boards, originally from \$150 each, now 20 percent off with code OPRAH; cambriausa.com)**

Good to the Last Drop

Are you there, vodka? It's me, jalapeño lime or citrus basil! Husband-and-wife team Doug and Jill Olson see to it that you drink your fruits and vegetables by infusing them into their California-made small-batch spirits. **(Originally \$28 each, now 20 percent off with code OPRAH; sonomacoastspirits.com)**



Butter Yourself Up

Whipped up in Charleston, South Carolina, by a dedicated team of 12 women with deliciously soft skin, these body butters are like a gorgeous dessert: rich, creamy, sensuous, irresistible. **(Originally \$12 each or \$50 for set of five, now 20 percent off with code OPRAH; oldwhalingcompany.com)**



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SEE CHANGE

These revolutionary readers let you work every angle.

Bunny Eyez, named by creators Stacy Fritz and Jenny Hutt for their late mother, Bunny, have temples that bend down like opera glasses—ideal when you're coloring your roots, doing a face mask, or baking (no more cookie dough in your hair!).

And the frames, available in five designs and 20 colors, tilt forward at 45 and 90 degrees, so you can check your notes and see the audience during your next presentation.

Out of sight!

PHOTOGRAPH BY
Peter Rosa

Readers, Bunny Eyez,
\$27 each; bunnyeyez.com
Camisole, L'Agence
Rings, Tuleste

STYLING: TIM BITICI. HAIR: PAUL WARREN USING RENÉ FURTERER. MAKEUP: CHRISTINA REYNA FOR MAKE UP FOREVER. MANICURE: ANA MARIA USING CHANEL.

Love That!

A black beach hat works on the sand and in the streets.
Echo; echodesign.com



\$79

This tasseled and bedazzled pouch adds a little flair to solid basics.
zara.com

\$50



GREAT BUYS UNDER \$100

BLACK AND WHITE

The classic combo gets elevated with hits of gold and rich embellishment.

\$68

Take a jumpsuit up a notch with a gold braided belt.
Jumpsuit, *Simply Vera Vera Wang*; kohls.com
Belt, *Deepa by Deepa Gurnani*; deepagurnani.com



\$88

\$35

Ruffles transform a traditional skirt into something feminine and fun.
H&M; hm.com

\$80

A tunic is perfect with straight-leg shorts or pants.
Karl Lagerfeld Paris; lordandtaylor.com



RICHARD MAJCHRZAK/STUDIO D. SOFT GOODS STYLING: ANITA SALERNO/
R.J. BENNETT REPRESENTS. ROSS. JB LAGROIX/GETTY IMAGES.

\$99

These dressed-up shorts look great with a cropped jacket or oversize tee.
White House Black Market; whbm.com



STYLE ICON

TRACEE ELLIS ROSS IN LOS ANGELES.



Bring on the drama with a pair of bold boho fringed dangles.
baublebar.com

\$38



This block-heel slide teams well with cocktail dresses, jeans, and everything in between.
Seychelles; seychellesfootwear.com

\$80

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L'ORÉAL PARIS

Love That!

The bright trim and playful call to action are fresh and fun. *Boden*; bodenusa.com

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SHIP SHAPE

Give your nautical looks a sophisticated twist with luxurious accents and bold hues.



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\$38

One, two, or three of these chunky stackable bracelets (sold separately) will lift most any outfit. *Ink + Alloy*; inkalloy.com



\$44

White wide-leg pants: instant polish. *Jennifer Lopez*; kohls.com



\$23

Marigold beautifully complements navy and white. *Ava & Viv*; target.com

The pop of white adds a cool touch to an elegant timepiece. *Anne Klein*; amazon.com/fashion



\$65



STYLE ICON

EMILY BLUNT STRIKES A POSE IN TORY BURCH AT THE DESIGNER'S SPRING 2018 RUNWAY SHOW.

Take your summer wardrobe to stylish heights with an espadrille-like wedge. *Tommy Hilfiger*; belk.com

\$79



Gold whipstitching glams up a classic shoulder bag. *Urban Expressions*; dsw.com

\$40



\$35

The scarf hemline and intricate pattern make an elegant statement. *H&M*; hm.com

Generous sleeves, pockets, a waist-defining belt... What more could you ask for in an everyday dress? *Gabrielle Union Collection at New York & Company*; nyandcompany.com

\$99



RICHARD MAJCHRZAK/STUDIO D. SOFT GOODS STYLING: ANITA SALERNO/ R.J. BENNETT REPRESENTS: BLUNT; CINDY ORD/GETTY IMAGES.



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Adam's STYLE SHEET

Bright color and whimsical prints always put a smile on my face.



Follow O creative director Adam Glassman on Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat @TheRealAdamSays.



1 Mad for Madras

My go-to tote is now available in my favorite print, with a matching jacket *and* shorts. When can I leave for vacation?

Tote, \$70, **pullover**, \$70, and **shorts**, \$55; llbean.com

LORD OF THE RINGS

David Yurman's latest collection of ceramic signet rings (available in eight colors) delivers a cool pop of luxe.



Rings, \$450 each; davidyurman.com



3

Eye Candy

Nothing's happier than a ROYGBIV moment; just keep it to one piece at a time.

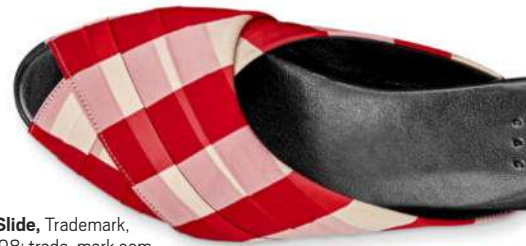
Necklace, Pandora Jewelry, \$80; pandora.net
Shoulder bag, \$30; zara.com
Sneaker, \$70; aldoshoes.com

4

Check Mate

What's summer without a little gingham? Worn with capri pants or a long full skirt, this slide puts some pep in your step.

Slide, Trademark, \$298; trade-mark.com



5

Tutti Frutti

I love a good lemon print or motif—but cherries, strawberries, and watermelon are just as delightful.

Clutch, Kayu, \$225; kayudesign.com
Skirt, Draper James, \$225; saksfifthavenue.com
Blazer, \$169; talbots.com
Sneaker, SeaVees for J.Crew, \$88; jcrew.com



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Adam's Home STYLE SHEET

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Bright Side
Pendant lamp,
\$296; rh.com



Raise a Glass
Tumblers, from \$12 each;
amandalindroth.com

Happy Hour
Wine tote with lid,
\$495;
ralphlauren.com



Look-See
Mirror, \$495;
shopsocietysocial.com



Ready to Roll
Pigeon & Poodle
storage cart,
\$570; antheminteriors.com



Take It Away
Flatware caddy, \$70;
williams-sonoma.com



Sit Tight
Armchair,
\$1,149;
wisteria.com



To Have and to Hold
Tote, \$285; pamelamunson.com



Lighten Up
Wall pendant, \$699;
palecek.com



Fish Out of Water
Deborah Rhodes
placemats, \$32 each;
neimanmarcus.com



Table Talk
Coffee table, \$109;
ikea.com



Let It Slide
Slip-on flat, \$100;
dolcevita.com

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Milk Makeup Highlighter in Lit/Champagne Pearl, \$24; milkmakeup.com



Ciaté London Dewy Stix Luminous Highlighting Balm, \$26; sephora.com



Avon True Color Illuminating Stick in Champagne, \$11; avon.com

Glow Sticks

To sport a gorgeous sun-kissed complexion, you could spend the summer strolling the piazzas of Rome—or try an infinitely more affordable option: a sophisticated modern **highlighter**. The skin-friendly creamy texture and ease of use will have you saying *arrivederci* to pressed-powder formulas. Just dab a few dots or a subtle line over the spots where you'd naturally get color (your cheekbones, forehead, the bridge of your nose), and blend with your fingertips. *Bellissima!*

PHOTOGRAPH BY *Peter Rosa*

HOT MESS SOS

Heat + humidity = potential beauty crisis. But help is here, thanks to five true experts—women for whom rough skin and frizzy hair are all in a day's work. Their real-world solutions will help you sail through the season gorgeously.

BY Pamela Edwards Christiani



Malia Manuel surfs the waves of the British Virgin Islands.

1 SUMMER BUMMER: Dry, brittle hair

THE EXPERT: Malia Manuel
Professional surfer, 24, Kauai, Hawaii

The ocean—good for the soul, not so great for your hair. Briny seawater can dehydrate strands, leaving them strawlike, so Manuel saturates hers with quenching oils regularly. “After every surf, I use a treatment with marula oil to bring back shine and help detangle,” she says. She likes MarulaOil Rare Oil Treatment (\$41; paulmitchell.com). And a friend turned Manuel on to essential oils like cedarwood, which helps soothe a dry, flaky scalp: “I add a few drops to my shampoo.”

Manuel exfoliates daily with a body brush to keep her skin soft.

“After, I slather on a calendula-based oil blend, which helps with circulation,” she says.



Aromatherapy Associates London Polishing Body Brush, \$32; aromatherapyassociates.com



In Fiore Calendula Solution Botanique, \$175; infiore.net



MANUEL: JIMMICANE

2 SUMMER BUMMER: Parched... everything

THE EXPERT:
Alexandria Cochran
Flight attendant, 27, Minneapolis



If you think your AC-chilled office is drying, try working at 40,000 feet. "The recycled air, the constant change in oxygen levels—it all leaves your skin very thirsty," Cochran says. Her hydrating musts include a rosewater face mist and fish oil tablets. "The fatty acids in fish oil help hydrate from the inside out," she says. After a particularly long flight, she'll use a sheet mask. "They're easy, usually cost less than \$5, and come in so many varieties: moisturizing, calming, nourishing," she explains. Cochran discovered Malin + Goetz Lip Moisturizer (\$14; malinandgoetz.com) in the first-class amenity kits and has been hooked ever since: "It has a matte finish, goes on smoothly, and moisturizes instantly."

Pond's Hydrate + Glow Sheet Mask, \$2.50; walmart.com



Mario Badescu Facial Spray, \$7; mariobadescu.com



3 SUMMER BUMMER: Roughed-up hands

THE EXPERT:
Muriel Olivares
Urban farmer, 35, Miami

For amateur gardeners and pros alike, frequent contact with soil and water wreaks havoc on the digits. To the rescue: Olivares's homemade salve. "I got the recipe years ago while apprenticing with

a farmer in upstate New York," she says. "I make it with my farm-grown calendula, beeswax, and virgin coconut oil. It does it all: treats dry skin and chapped lips; soothes cuts, scrapes, and sunburns; and just generally moisturizes." When she can't whip up her bespoke balm, Olivares uses Wooden Spoon Herbs Heal All Salve (\$12; woodenspoonherbs.com).

"I always wear a sun hat, which makes my hair really sweaty, so I have to wash it every day," says Manuel. She prefers gentle baby shampoo, which doesn't overstrip.

Babo Botanicals Moisturizing Baby Shampoo & Wash, \$14.50; babobotanicals.com



4



SUMMER BUMMER: Pesky buggers and scorching sun

THE EXPERT:
Elizabeth Berkley
Forest wildlife biologist, 37, Pendleton, Oregon

Since she works in the woods, Berkley is well prepped to deal with all varieties of chomping little pests. "When bugs are an issue, I recommend DEET-free, waterproof mosquito patches and natural insect-repellent spray," she says. Try Don't Bite Me! Patches (\$11; dontbitemepatch.com) and Repel Lemon Eucalyptus Insect Repellent (\$5; target.com). And, of course, she uses SPF religiously. "I also like a powder foundation with sunscreen," she adds. "The BareMinerals version is so lightweight, I can't even tell I'm wearing it."



Côtz Sensitive Sunscreen SPF 40, \$23; dermstore.com

BareMinerals Original Loose Powder Foundation SPF 15, \$29; bareminerals.com



5



SUMMER BUMMER: Not-so-fresh feet

THE EXPERT:
Simone Spigner
Tennis coach, 49, New York City

Running around after mini tennis hopefuls in the blazing Harlem sun keeps Spigner on her toes—but by the end of each day, her dogs are barking. She wears absorbent, moisture-wicking Adidas Superlite Socks (\$18 for six-pack; adidas.com) to cut down on perspiration and alternates her sneakers every day. She also massages her feet with a few drops of lavender essential oil at night. "It helps me relax and wind down," Spigner says. "I apply it right before going to bed." Sweet dreams!



Now Lavender Essential Oil, \$19; iberb.com



Jinsoo Nail Polish in Birdie, \$18; jinsoon.com

Spigner credits her callus-free life to weekly soaks with Johnson's Foot Soap (\$3; walgreens.com) and regular pedicures. "I love pretty colors on my toes," she says.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN

▶ Our decade-by-decade guide to hair loss—and solutions to help stop the shedding. BY Jessica Migala

THE IDEA OF thinning hair may conjure images of balding men with awkward comb-overs, but approximately 40 percent of sufferers are female. Losing around 100 strands daily is normal; if your hair is coming out by the handful or your scalp is showing through, it's time to get help. And there is help. Female pattern hair loss (FPHL), called androgenetic alopecia, is the most likely cause. Your dermatologist will probably recommend a topical product with minoxidil, typically the first line of defense. Other treatments include spironolactone, finasteride, platelet-rich plasma injections, and hair transplantation, when your doctor moves hair-producing follicles from the back of the head to sparse areas. If FPHL has been ruled out, however, your age can help pinpoint the culprit.

IN YOUR 30s

Possible cause: Pregnancy. As many as half of postpartum women notice “a massive loss of hair around two or three months after giving birth,” says Lisa Ishii, MD, a hair restoration expert at Johns Hopkins Medicine in Baltimore. During pregnancy, an increased number of hair follicles shift to a resting cycle and stop shedding, “so for nine months, you’re holding on to hair you otherwise would have lost,” Ishii explains. After you have the baby and your hormone levels return to normal, that extra hair can drop all at once. Another cause could be an



underactive thyroid, though additional symptoms, like constipation and weight gain, are also usually present.

Treatment: Postpartum? You just have to ride it out. But your hair should grow back to its normal fullness. If you suspect you have a thyroid problem, see an endocrinologist to address the underlying condition.

IN YOUR 40s

Possible cause: Major psychological stress (the death of a loved one, divorce, job change) or physical stress (a major surgery) may be at the root. “Your body is redirecting energy to give extra support to overworked vital organs rather than to growing your hair,” says Ishii. Stopping birth control can also cause temporary hair loss in some women.

Treatment: If the loss stems from stress, you’ll have to wait for hair to begin to fill out again (don’t worry, it will). In the meantime, it may be helpful to discuss the cause of your anxiety with a therapist—and consider practicing known destressors like yoga and meditation.

IN YOUR 50s AND 60s

Possible cause: Frontal fibrosing alopecia (FFA), a disease associated with inflammation of hair follicles, is rare but on the rise, says Lynne Goldberg, MD, director of the hair clinic at Boston Medical Center. It commonly takes out your frontal hairline and eyebrows.

Treatment: If you suspect FFA, see a doctor as soon as possible: “The earlier you address the condition with topical and systemic anti-inflammatory medications, the more hair you can save,” Goldberg says. Now...get growing.

WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE ANY ROOM BEAUTIFUL



From the country’s most popular interior design magazine, a collection of inspiring images and pro tricks for uncovering the potential of every living space

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SAM KAPLAN/TRUNK ARCHIVE

From beautiful design details to stunning rooms, *Veranda* captures the allure of luxurious decorating—from A to Z!



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O, Beautiful!



Fenix Daily Rehydrating Sunscreen SPF 30+, \$30; drskinspa.com



Every month or two, Akil has her brows done by guru Tonya Crooks. "I love how thick they are," she says.



Kiehl's Creme de Corps Body Moisturizer, \$30; kiehls.com



Surratt Beauty Relevée Lash Curler, \$30; sephora.com



The BrowGal Skinny Eyebrow Pencil in Black, \$23; thebrowgal.com



Santa Maria Novella Olio di Jojoba Body Oil, \$78; smnovella.com



Michele Weaver as Nuri, a sitcom staff writer, and Will Catlett as Yasir, an aspiring writer-director, in *Love Is* ...

Olga Lorencin Skin Care Weightless Moisturizer, \$75; olgalorencin.skincare.com



BEAUTY TALK

MARA BROCK AKIL

Akil credits her radiant skin to regular facials from Olga Lorencin at the Kinara Skin Care Clinic in Los Angeles.

The 48-year-old creator of TV hits *Girlfriends* and *Being Mary Jane*, whose show *Love Is* ... debuts on OWN in June, discusses gray power, her morning ritual, and where she gets her glow.

Q: You've posted a lot on social media about embracing your naturally gray hair. Why is it important for you to make that statement?

A: When I started letting the grays come in, I was just trying to save time—there were things I'd rather do than run back and forth to the salon every few weeks. But I noticed I was avoiding posting pictures of myself on social media. Initially, posting was about allowing me to get over myself and get on with it.

Q: Because there's still a stigma about gray hair making you look older?

A: Right. For me, it felt brave to walk out of the house with gray hair. It feels even braver to take a picture and claim it. I like that power.

Q: The response has been very positive.

A: I've received nearly 9,000 likes on one photo and so much love; I think people could see that I was accepting who I was in that moment. But I also realize I can change my mind if I want to. We women don't often give ourselves permission to do that. If I color my hair again, so be it.

Q: Your hair is gorgeous. How do you take care of it?

A: I found someone who understands my hair: Shai Amiel, the Curl Doctor. He cuts my curls individually. It takes forever, but it's worth it, and he introduced me to DevaCurl products.

Q: What makes you feel beautiful?

A: I feel beautiful when I'm chasing and fulfilling my dreams. Lately, people have been saying things like, "Mara, you're glowing," even though

I'm usually looking like a hot mess—no makeup, hair everywhere. I think they see the happiness I feel from being who I'm supposed to be.

Q: Any at-home beauty rituals?

A: My husband teases me that I spend an hour every morning rubbing in moisturizer. Kiehl's Creme de Corps is my go-to body lotion, and I love Santa Maria Novella's jojoba oil.

Q: Do you wear makeup?

A: I don't know a lot about it—and I'm not the woman who's going to go to the department store counter and figure it out. I am, however, a pro with the eyelash curler. At my age, my eyes need a little lift.

Q: What keeps you sane?

A: Traveling alone. My last solo trip was to the Aman Amangiri resort, not too far from the Grand Canyon. I stayed for five days. It's where I wrote the pilot for my new show.

Q: Yes, the show! Please tell us about *Love Is* ...

A: It's a TV memoir inspired by my relationship with my husband [writer, director, and producer Salim Akil]. Most people can't believe that we're married and have also worked side by side consistently for 20 years. They are constantly saying that I should write a book about this. My thoughts were always, *Ain't nobody got time to write a book*. But then I realized I could create a TV show. —AS TOLD TO P.E.C.

AKIL: STEFANIE KEENAN/GETTY IMAGES; LOVE IS...: RICHARD A. DUCREE © 2018 WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT INC./COURTESY OF OWN.



DevaCurl No-Poo Original Zero Lather Conditioning Cleanser, \$22; devacurl.com

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Feeling Good

BEATING THE HEAT(STROKE) ♦ SLOWING THE FLOW ♦ ACUPUNCTURE FOR ALL

Bull's-Eye!

One-and-done sessions give new meaning to the phrase *targeted therapy*.

BY Juno DeMelo



ILLUSTRATIONS BY *Andrea De Santis*



IN LESS THAN two hours, you can get a tune-up and oil change, a tax refund, or a massage—and maybe a new outlook on life. That’s the idea behind single-session therapy (SST), a method of counseling in which you show up, talk, listen, learn, and leave, possibly forever. “In SST, the therapist and the client approach the meeting as though it will likely be the only one,” says Michael F. Hoyt, PhD, who literally helped write the book on this brief but meaningful kind of therapy—indeed, he’s coedited two volumes on the topic.

Hoyt isn’t the only one who believes a single session can do the job. In her popular podcast, *Where Should We Begin?*, couples therapist and best-selling author Esther Perel makes significant headway against decades-long relationship problems in three-hour stand-alone sessions. In addition, “talk-in” clinics, which provide walk-in counseling for youths and their families or caregivers, are catching on in Canada, and therapists in the UK and Australia advertise their single-session expertise.

Hoyt didn’t set out to specialize in quickies. He’s a clinical psychologist originally trained in psychodynamic psychotherapy, which usually involves regular sessions over the course of months or years. But in the late 1980s, he was working with fellow psychologist Moshe Talmon, PhD, at an HMO in Northern California, when Talmon noticed that

many of their patients came into the clinic only once. Along with psychologist Robert Rosenbaum, PhD, Hoyt and Talmon decided to follow up with 200 of these patients to ask why. “We were surprised to hear that the great majority felt like they got what they needed,” says Hoyt. And this wasn’t unique to their clinic: Other research showed that 20 to nearly 60 percent of those who visited a therapist went only once. So the trio did a study with 58 patients, in which they structured every first session as if it would be the last; 59 percent left feeling satisfied with their treatment and declined additional appointments, and of these one-and-done patients, 88 percent reported improvement three months later in the complaint they’d come to address. The researchers then developed guidelines for how to reframe a typical session based on the assumption that the patient wouldn’t be back.

In 1988, Hoyt, Talmon, and Rosenbaum presented their findings at a psychology conference in San Francisco. While some critics called SST “Band-Aid therapy,” Holt says that many practitioners were intrigued by a method that could help large numbers of people while freeing up time for those requiring extended attention. As more professionals practiced SST, follow-up questionnaires showed that not only were patients getting a lot out of their session, but solving one problem led to improvement in other areas of their lives.

So, how does it typically work? In appointments that average 60 to 90 minutes, the therapist focuses on your strengths and skills, then helps you identify and practice things you can do now to get yourself unstuck. SST uses principles similar to



CAN WE TALK?

While there’s no SST directory to help you find a provider, you can check therapists’ websites for phrases like *short term, brief therapy, solution-focused, and problem-solving*; call these providers and ask if they’re open to meeting once or a few times. You can also experience a de facto form of SST if you have access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that offers free short-term counseling to employees with personal or work-related problems. Even if EAP counselors have never heard of SST, they know that each session could be the only one they’ll have with a client, so they make it as useful as possible, says Janet Schirtzinger, EAP manager of clinical services at Advocate Aurora Health, which offers EAPs to companies in the Midwest.

cognitive-behavioral and solution-focused therapies, both of which are intended to help you fix your problem yourself. “Rather than looking at what negative thoughts and behaviors might be causing your issue, we look at what positive ones could solve it,” says Hoyt.

That method strongly appealed to Keren, one of Talmon’s recent patients in Israel. Though Keren is 48, married, and the mother of adult children, her parents were still trying to control her finances. But she wasn’t interested in a deep analysis of the past; she wanted specific advice on how to talk to her parents about an issue that had been torturing her for some time: putting the house they had purchased and she lived in into her name. She worried that even broaching this subject could damage their relationship.

After 30 minutes with Talmon, Keren felt like he fully understood her family dynamic; they spent the second half of the session focusing on the imminent conversation and role-playing. “Dr. Talmon helped me see that not only had I been depending on my parents, but they were depending on me, too,” Keren says. She also realized that her reaction to her parents’ response—as bad as it might be—was completely in her hands. Two days after the session, Keren sat down with her mother alone and expressed how at this point in her life, not having the property in her name put her at a disadvantage. To her surprise, her mother agreed. “She said she’d never thought about it that way.” Within three weeks, her parents presented her with a legal letter saying the property was hers. Keren doesn’t plan to talk to Talmon about her parents again—but she did make

an appointment to discuss a totally different issue involving her boss.

People who tend to do best with SST, Hoyt says, can identify a relatively specific goal: dealing with grief, building self-esteem, validating feelings. In studies, SST has also been shown to help reduce anxiety, recurring nightmares, alcohol abuse, and self-harm, as well as help manage phobias and panic attacks. (Of course, there may be cases, as when someone has been abused or is dealing with trauma, when a single session “might open a can of worms and leave the client with feelings they can’t handle,” says Ryan Howes, PhD, a clinical psychologist in private practice in Pasadena, California, who has done a handful of one-off sessions at patients’ request. Those cases are when additional sessions make sense. And Hoyt even says SST could be called “making the most of each visit” therapy, but, he admits, “that’s not as catchy.”)

The suggestion that you could solve a problem right here, right now, today, can be empowering. “The most common number of therapy visits many people commit to is zero,” says Brian Yates, PhD, a professor of psychology at American University in Washington, D.C., who studies the cost-effectiveness of therapy. So if someone tries one visit and comes away with a concrete plan, a referral, or even the desire to attend more sessions, “that can be a whole lot better than nothing.”

And in the end, says Talmon, “no matter how many sessions you need, if you approach each one as though it’s the only one, it’s likely to be the most cost-effective form of therapy you’ll ever have.”



A Phone Call Away

When you need to talk, they're ready to listen. *BY Katherine Hobson*

YOU KNOW ABOUT hotlines offering free 24/7 help to people having an emotional emergency. But what if your really, really bad day doesn't qualify as a crisis? Consider a "warmline."

These free, locally based, peer-to-peer resources were created to give people with mental health issues someone to talk to after business hours or between appointments, says Chris Pudlinski, PhD, a communications professor at Central Connecticut State University who has studied warmlines. You don't need a diagnosis to dial in. The person on the other end will be a paid staffer or volunteer who has received mental health services; many callers find it powerful to talk to someone who has faced similar struggles and found a way to move forward, says Scott Metzger, director of recovery services at the nonprofit

Sweetser, which operates a warmline in Maine.

To find a toll-free or local number, try Googling "warmline" and your state, suggests Rebecca Dalgin, PhD, director of the rehabilitation counseling program at the University of Scranton. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and the National Sexual Assault Hotline will also take calls from people in nonemergency situations, and the organization Exhale runs a national talk line that exclusively offers post-abortion support.

You won't be able to talk to a mental health professional or get a diagnosis or a prescription, and there may be a time limit on your call. But the person you talk to will likely have a list of resources to help you find in-person help should you want it. Your conversation may be the nudge you need to take the next step.

U-TURN

▶▶ Do you have **abnormal uterine bleeding**? Here's how to find your way back to freedom. BY Sarah Stankorb

MY PERIOD TOOK OVER my life when I was 35. For 63 out of 80 days, I bled. I was exhausted, anemic, frequently light-headed, occasionally doubled over with cramps, and spending a fortune on tampons. After about a year, my doctor diagnosed me with abnormal uterine bleeding (AUB), defined as excessively heavy periods, bleeding or spotting between periods or after sex, bleeding that lasts more than eight days, or menstrual cycles that are longer than 34 days or shorter than 24. It's often attributed to hormonal issues, or structural abnormalities like fibroids or polyps. As I learned firsthand, treatments range from popping the Pill to undergoing major surgery. If you're one of the millions of women who suffer from AUB, relief starts with knowing your options....



BLOODY HELL
Abnormal uterine bleeding affects up to 30 percent of women of reproductive age.

HORMONE THERAPY

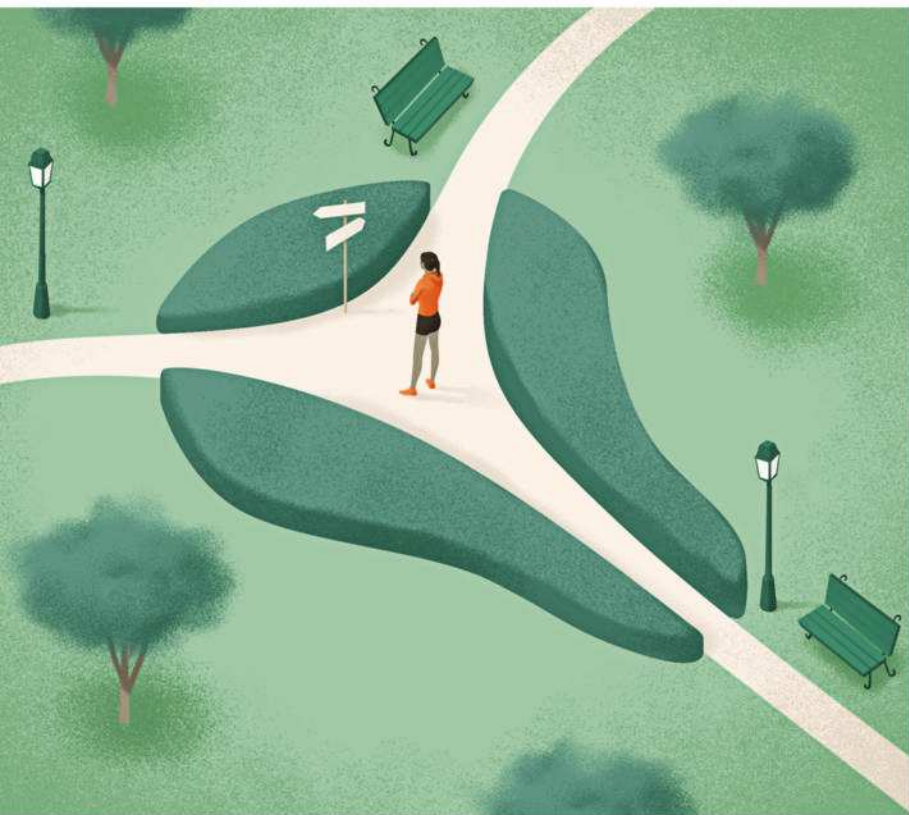
Low-dose versions of the Pill or a progestin-releasing IUD can treat AUB by either ending or regulating menstrual periods. Unfortunately, while the Pill may control the blood, many women (like me) refuse to live with the side effects, which can include weight gain and severe mood swings. And for some women (yes, me again), an IUD may not prevent breakthrough bleeding.

ENDOMETRIAL ABLATION

If you don't have a uterine lining to shed, you're less likely to bleed—or so the theory goes, which is why procedures to destroy the endometrial lining have been used for more than a century. Over time, methods of ablation have become more sophisticated. In 1997, the FDA approved a device called Thermachoice, in which a balloon is inserted in the uterus through the cervix and filled with a sterile solution that is then heated. Now the lining can be frozen off (cryoablation), zapped with high-energy radio waves, or burned off with heat-releasing plasma. It may sound like torture, but so is bleeding from Christmas to Easter. And there's not even any cutting or sewing involved, points out Barbara Levy, MD, vice president for health policy for the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. The doctor works through the vagina in a quick outpatient procedure using anesthesia (usually local, occasionally general). Still, even though the reproductive organs are left intact, pregnancy following ablation is dangerous. It's normal to cramp and spot for a few days afterward. Endometrial ablation stops all bleeding 30 to 50 percent of the time—but it has mixed results with adenomyosis, a cause of AUB, in which the endometrial cells migrate into the muscular wall of the uterus.

HYSTERECTOMY

The surgical removal of the uterus, and sometimes the ovaries, is something many women (and many insurance companies) would prefer to avoid. However, today's procedures aren't our mothers' hysterectomies: Minimally invasive techniques, including the removal of the uterus through the vagina, laparoscopic surgery, and robot-assisted laparoscopic surgery, have decreased major complications like blood clots, nerve and tissue damage, and infections. Patients may have only a few scratch-size incisions, spend no more than a night or two in the hospital, and endure as little as three weeks of recovery. And when all else fails, hysterectomy stops AUB 100 percent of the time. It worked for me.



What Your Health Tracker CAN (AND CAN'T) DO

We road-tested five devices to find out whether they're worth the investment. BY Alice Oglethorpe



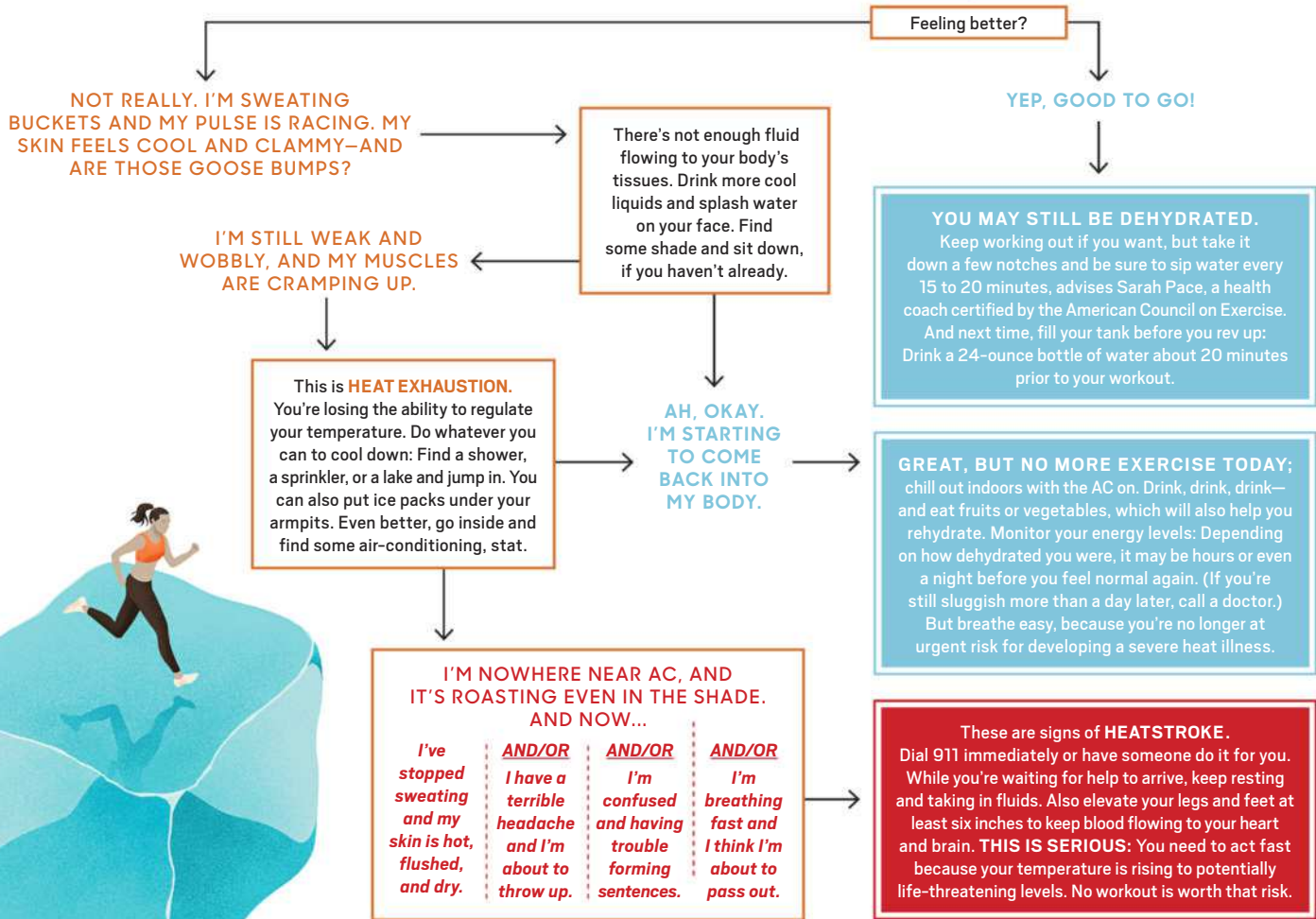
THE IDEA IS UNDENIABLY APPEALING: Slap this strap on your wrist or clip a doodad onto your shirt, and you can monitor everything from mood to motion, optimizing each breath and step. We bought into the promise of these intriguing new health trackers, but we wanted the experts to reality-check them.

THE GOAL	THE TRACKER	THE IDEA	EXPERTS SAY
Ballerina posture	LUMO LIFT (\$100; lumobodytech.com) is an oval magnet that attaches to your shirt or bra strap and buzzes if you slump for more than, say, 15 seconds.	You'll be gently reminded to sit up straight.	Standing (or sitting) tall is a worthy goal, says Laura Deon, MD, an assistant professor in physical medicine and rehabilitation at Chicago's Rush University Medical College. "Good posture can keep your bones and joints aligned, preventing pain and improving your mood and appearance." Keep in mind, though: To see the benefits, you'll need to wear it all the time.
A more zen frame of mind	GARMIN VÍVOSPORT (\$170; garmin.com) assesses stress levels by tracking heart rate variability (HRV), a measure of the variation in time between heartbeats.	You check your levels to see whether stress is getting the better of you; if it is, the tracker can lead you through a slow breathing exercise designed to calm you.	"This is an okay source of data on HRV, which can absolutely be influenced by stress," says Richard Gevartz, PhD, a psychology professor at San Diego's Alliant International University. And breathing exercises have been shown to help bring HRV into line. Yet HRV can be affected by many other things, like exercise, illness, depression, and fatigue, notes Gevartz.
More and better sleep	FITBIT ALTA HR (\$150; fitbit.com) is a wristband that uses an accelerometer and heart rate monitor to chart your sleep cycles.	You'll see an estimate of the number of hours you spent in the phases of REM, deep, and light sleep, as well as your cumulative snooze time.	"It's valuable to know how much time you spend sleeping," says Katherine Sharkey, MD, PhD, an associate professor of medicine at Brown University. "But the only way to accurately tell when you're in the restorative REM phase is by looking at brain waves." If you're exhausted but your tracker confirms you're getting seven to eight hours of shut-eye, talk to a doctor about sleep disorders.
Boosted mood	SUNSPRITE (\$100; sunsprite.com) clips to your shirt and uses sensors to detect exposure to bright light (from the sun or a light-therapy box).	Bright light is linked to improved mood. This device tells you if you're getting 30 minutes a day, the amount the company's experts say is enough to help us feel sunny.	"Research shows that many people who spend most of their time indoors need more bright light than they routinely get," says Norman Rosenthal, MD, a psychiatrist and seasonal affective disorder researcher. "Thirty minutes a day is a reasonable goal, but there's no specific amount of exposure that would benefit every person." Start with the minimum; see how you feel.
A healthy heart	KARDIABAND (\$199 plus \$99 per year; alivecor.com) is a wristband that attaches to an Apple Watch face to track irregular heartbeats (arrhythmias).	If you're alerted that your heart rate seems too fast or slow (or if you feel like you're having palpitations), hold your thumb over the band's sensor to get an EKG reading.	"It's very good at detecting the arrhythmias that can increase your risk of stroke or heart failure," says Gordon Tomaselli, MD, chief of the cardiology division at Johns Hopkins University, "and can be useful if you have a diagnosed arrhythmia." For everyone else: The Apple Watch itself measures beats per minute to show how hard your heart is working.

SWEATING THE DETAILS

Exercising in extreme heat can be dangerous—even deadly. Use this chart to learn when to call it quits. BY *Nicole Clancy*

WORKING OUT IN SWELTERING weather doesn't just *feel* harder: Your body is putting in extra effort to regulate its temperature. That's because abnormally high internal temps can damage your muscles, your organs, and even your central nervous system, says Pamela Peeke, MD, a spokesperson for the American College of Sports Medicine. Humidity only makes things worse, thwarting your cooldown mechanism by significantly slowing the evaporation of sweat. If you must exert yourself in Hades-like heat, pay close attention to your body's red flags. Here's how to avoid going from frying pan to fire.



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a lot less bulky, and drier too.*
Need I say more?”



Leading Bladder Leak Pad



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The super absorbent core turns liquid to gel,
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Always Discreet. For bladder leaks.



*Always Discreet 4, 5, and 6 drop pads vs. the equivalent Leading Brand pads.



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Feeling Good



Go All Out

YOGIS ARE INCREASINGLY reaching new heights by attempting handstands on ocean bluffs or warrior poses atop mountain boulders, often in the name of impressive Instagram posts (search #cliffsideyoga for some dramatic shots). But the benefits of fresh-air workouts go beyond a pretty picture—and don't require life-threatening moves. One study of 754 older adults, led by researchers at the University of California, San Diego, discovered that those who got active outside rather than inside, usually by walking, averaged about 30 more minutes of exercise per week. The general consensus among experts? Outdoor activities may be more pleasurable, and therefore you're more likely to do them consistently—whether you're strolling through your elm-lined neighborhood, running around your local reservoir, or taking your yoga practice to the edge. —CATHRYNE KELLER

Better IN BED

Lay your sleep woes to rest with these dreamy finds.



NO SWEAT

These pretty rayon-blend pj's wick moisture and feel cool on your skin, leaving you dry and comfy from p.m. to a.m. (Cool Nights pajamas in Floral Bird Ivory, top, \$40, and bottom, \$42; soma.com)



SOUND SLEEP

Choose from three white-noise options with this portable machine that drowns out disruptive sounds in hotels or at home. (Rohm sound machine, \$35; marpac.com)



STEEP AID

A citrusy nightcap containing the natural anxiety remedies lemon balm, valerian, and passionflower may help you put your head to bed. (Dr. Jackson's Relax loose-leaf tea, \$25; luckyscent.com)



SWEET SPOTS

These grown-up candies are made with five simple ingredients, including hemp-derived cannabidiol extract, which won't get you high but has been shown to encourage a calm mood. (Lord Jones CBD gumdrops, \$45; lordjonesbrand.com)



REST EASY

Built for a queen (or a full, or a king), this mattress is covered in organic cotton and comes in three firmness levels. You can try it out for four months before committing. (Saatva coil-on-coil mattress, \$1,249 for queen set; saatvamattress.com)



SMOOTH OPERATOR

This innovative pillow supports your neck; its silky fabric prevents a.m. face creases. (Nurse Jamie Beauty Bear Age Defy memory foam pillow, \$79; dermstore.com)



LIGHTS OUT

Via app, this smart lamp lets you schedule evening and daytime brightness levels that'll lull you to sleep at night—then rouse you in the morning. (GE Lighting C by GE Sol, \$150; amazon.com)



TAKE THE HEAT

The high-tech material in these breathable sheets dissipates body warmth, so you'll keep your cool all night long. (Ver-Tex Performance sheets, \$299 for queen set; bedgear.com)

REFRESH!

MIND • BODY • SOUL

BRIGHTER BITES

▶ If you've mastered zucchini noodles, you're ready to move on to these clever green-veggie creations adapted from Ali Maffucci's latest cookbook, *Inspiralized & Beyond*.

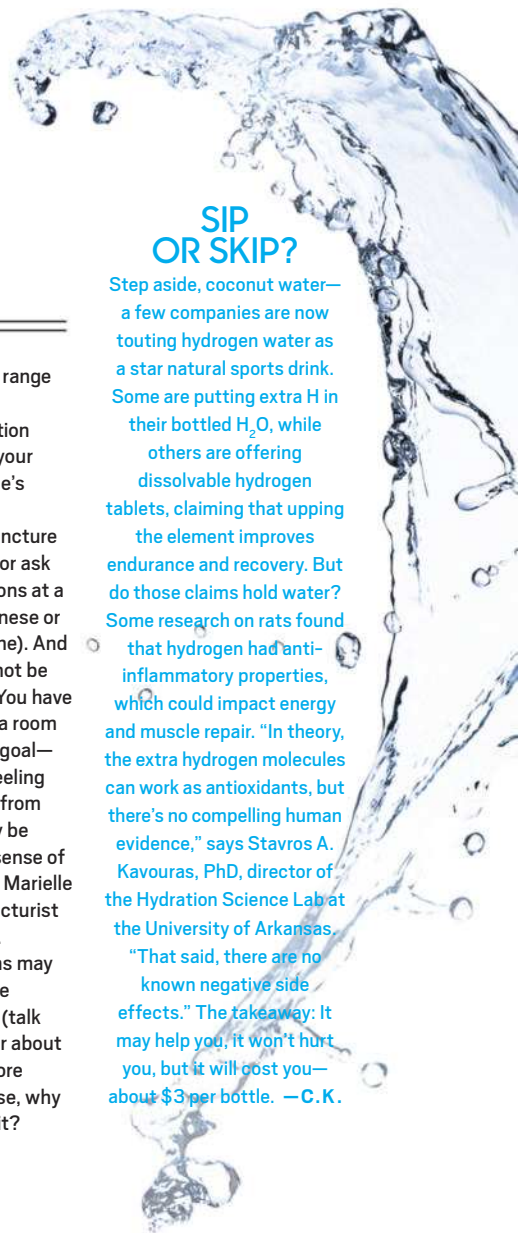


Brussels Sprouts Sliders

Preheat oven to 375°. In a small bowl, combine 1 Tbsp. **olive oil**; ½ Tbsp. **soy sauce**; 1 **garlic** clove, pressed; ¼ tsp. **ground cumin**; and a pinch each of **cayenne pepper** and **smoked paprika**. Trim and halve 20 large **Brussels sprouts**, brush both sides with oil mixture, and set on a parchment-lined baking sheet, cut sides down. Bake for 10 minutes, turn, and continue baking until tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Let cool slightly, smear cut sides with **mustard**, and sandwich a slice of cooked **tofu** (or meat) between halves. Secure with toothpicks and serve.

Broccoli Tots

Preheat oven to 400°. In a medium bowl, combine 1 cup grated **broccoli**; ¼ cup finely diced **white onion**; 1 large **garlic** clove, minced; ⅓ cup **almond flour**; ⅓ cup grated **Parmesan**; 3 Tbsp. chopped **parsley**; 1 large **egg**, lightly beaten; ½ tsp. **salt**; and a large pinch of **ground black pepper**. Mix well, form into tot shapes (add more flour if too wet), and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake, flipping halfway through, until edges are browned and crisp, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool for 5 minutes and serve with your favorite dip.



SIP OR SKIP?

Step aside, coconut water—a few companies are now touting hydrogen water as a star natural sports drink. Some are putting extra H in their bottled H₂O, while others are offering dissolvable hydrogen tablets, claiming that upping the element improves endurance and recovery. But do those claims hold water? Some research on rats found that hydrogen had anti-inflammatory properties, which could impact energy and muscle repair. "In theory, the extra hydrogen molecules can work as antioxidants, but there's no compelling human evidence," says Stavros A. Kavouras, PhD, director of the Hydration Science Lab at the University of Arkansas. "That said, there are no known negative side effects." The takeaway: It may help you, it won't hurt you, but it will cost you—about \$3 per bottle. —C.K.

Stick TOGETHER

▶ Group acupuncture can save you cash. Here's what to expect when you get poked en masse. BY Liz Krieger

ACUPUNCTURE HAS been shown to help with a number of health issues, including headaches and back pain, but you may not feel so great about the cost. A single session can run upwards of \$100 in big cities, it may take several visits to notice effects, and the treatment isn't typically covered by insurance. But if you're willing to give up a little

privacy, you can slash the price. Many centers, like Brooklyn's Slope Wellness and Seattle's Green Point Acupuncture, now offer group appointments, at which a few people are treated simultaneously (and discreetly) by a single practitioner at a lower rate. You'll likely be in a room with at least two other patients, with everyone on a separate table or reclining chair. There may be curtains or folding screens between you to create some personal space, and there's often a white-noise machine to drown out sounds. Though appointments tend to be staggered, you might have to wait your turn; the acupuncturist has only two hands, and another patron may need her needles taken out before yours can be inserted. The

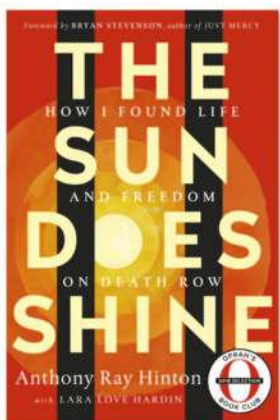
payoff? Prices can range from \$15 to \$55, depending on location (to find a clinic in your area, try the People's Organization of Community Acupuncture at pocacoop.com, or ask for recommendations at a local school of Chinese or alternative medicine). And affordability may not be the only benefit: "You have multiple people in a room with one common goal—to heal—and the feeling of deep relaxation from the treatment may be amplified by that sense of communion," says Marielle Ceresa, an acupuncturist at Slope Wellness. Complex conditions may not be suited to the community model (talk to your practitioner about your concerns before booking). Otherwise, why not take a stab at it?



BRUSSELS SPROUTS SLIDERS: EVAN SUNG. WATER: TETRA IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES. ACUPUNCTURE: MIKA/GETTY IMAGES.

Reading Room

SPECIAL BOOK CLUB EDITION



DELIVERANCE

▶ For nearly 30 years, Ray Hinton's home was death row, where he desperately hoped the courts would finally acknowledge his innocence. Now he's free, and his memoir, *The Sun Does Shine*, is the new Oprah's Book Club pick.

I WAS IN ALABAMA interviewing social-justice warrior Bryan Stevenson and noticed a book on his desk. As I was leaving, he gave it to me. And for the next two days I was glued to Ray Hinton's soul-searing memoir. It will stay with me forever. As Stevenson—who personally took up Hinton's case 12 years into his sentence and finally got him released from prison after he'd

served 28 years for two murders he didn't commit—puts it, the tale is “a textbook example of injustice.” I was honored, a few weeks after I finished reading, to sit down with Ray and find out more about what he went through and how, remarkably, he kept the faith.

OPRAH: Ray, I've been listening to people's stories for a long time, but yours

is about the most incredible. You spent almost three decades in prison for crimes you were not guilty of. Take us back to your arrest, when you were 29.

RAY HINTON: I was cutting the grass in the back of the house where I lived with my mother, in Burnwell, Alabama. After a few minutes, I looked up and there were two white gentlemen standing there. One asked, “Are you Anthony Ray Hinton?” I said I was. They said they were detectives and had a warrant for my arrest. When I asked what for, they wouldn’t say. They handcuffed me and put me into the squad car.

OW: Your mom was still inside?

RH: I begged them to let me tell her what was happening. They took me into the house in handcuffs. Mama screamed and hollered and told them I hadn’t done anything, but it didn’t matter. It wasn’t until later that they said the charges were first-degree robbery, kidnapping, and attempted murder.

OW: What did you say?

RH: I said I hadn’t done any of that. But they told me that because there would be a white prosecutor, judge, and jury, they’d make sure I’d be found guilty.

OW: How did you respond?

RH: I asked the detective when this crime took place. When he told me, I said, “Thank you, Jesus.” I was at work at that time, and my supervisor—who was white—could confirm that. I gave the detective his number.

OW: So you figured your boss would clear up the misunderstanding and the police would realize they had the wrong man.

RH: Yes. The detective left the room. When he got back, he said: “The good news is, your alibi checks out. The bad news is, we’re going to charge you with capital murder.”

OW: Now, your mother was one of those strong, black, Southern women who believed in authority, that the police were there to help.

RH: Yes, and that’s what I believed.

OW: So then they go back to your mother’s house and take her gun, which hadn’t been fired in 25 years, and claim the bullets matched those found at the crime scene.

RH: They dusted it off and polished it up and lied—they actually lied.

OW: And after you were charged, you never even got to go home. They held you for

13 months before you went to trial. And the trial was a fiasco—they’d already decided.

RH: When I was indicted and the judge read the charges and asked if I could afford an attorney, I said no, so he appointed one.

That attorney didn’t even ask me my name. He told me he hadn’t gone to law school to do pro bono work. I asked, “Would it make a difference if I told you I was innocent?” He said, “The problem with that statement is that all of y’all is always doing something, and then saying you didn’t do it.”

OW: Take us to the courtroom after a year has passed, and the ballistics expert your lawyer hired—missing an eye and no expert—has messed up badly. At that point did you think, *I’m done for*?



RH: Until that moment I thought justice would prevail. When I realized it wouldn’t, it just sucked everything out of me. But I wanted to protect my mama. I didn’t know if she understood that conviction meant the death penalty.

OW: You were immediately put on death row, where you had some very dark nights of the soul. You literally stopped speaking.

RH: I didn’t speak for the first three years. The guards thought I couldn’t talk. It was as if God had taken out my vocal cords.

OW: But three years in, you heard the man in the next cell crying—wailing and wailing.

RH: He’d lost his mother. I’d lived next to him and never even known his name. I wasn’t there to make friends. But I thought of his mother and my mother, and how

from an early age mine had taught me compassion. So I hollered through the wall: “Is something wrong over there?” At first he didn’t answer. Then he told me his mom had passed. I said I was sorry. I told a corny joke, and we laughed a little bit. The next morning I realized my voice was back, and my sense of humor, too.

OW: On that night you realized you weren’t the only man on death row.

RH: I realized we were both still human, and it’s human nature to reach out.

OW: All that time, you knew you were innocent. Did you have to let that go?

RH: Yes. That, and my life as it was. Gone. To stay sane I lived in my head, where I could travel and imagine. In my mind, I played a championship game with the Knicks. I won Wimbledon five times. If the Yankees needed a home run, I came to bat.

OW: But you also started getting to know the other prisoners, like Henry.

RH: Henry was KKK. His father was a Klan leader who’d gotten upset that a black man hadn’t been convicted of killing a white man, and ordered his son and other Klansmen to kill the first black man they came across. They hanged that poor kid.

OW: Henry was convicted of that crime—and would become the first white man to be executed for a lynching in 84 years.

RH: Yes. I didn’t know that’s who he was at first. We were just talking.

OW: Nobody can see each other on the row, so you know one another only by voices.

RH: Yes. Henry had been taught to hate all his life. He didn’t know any different. Me and some of the other blacks there didn’t judge him, since everyone on death row was accused of killing somebody. We became friends.

OW: Knowing what he’d done, you could still be friends?

RH: I was there for something I didn’t do. I didn’t know whether he’d done it or not.

OW: You never asked him?

RH: That was between him and his God.

OW: But he eventually admitted he’d been raised a racist.

RH: Death row was the only place where I never witnessed racism. We all went to bed with a death sentence on our heads and

continued on page 114



**YOUR ROOSTER MAY
BE A PHONE ALARM.
YOUR TRACTOR
MIGHT BE AN SUV.
BUT WHEN YOUR
OVEN ROASTED
TURKEY BREAST
IS CRAFTED WITH
NOTHING BUT HEART
AND HARD WORK,**

**YOU'RE
CLOSER
TO THE
FARM
THAN
YOU
THINK**



NO ARTIFICIAL PRESERVATIVES • NO ADDED NITRATES* • NO ADDED NITRITES*

*Except for those naturally occurring in the celery juice powder and sea salt.



July 2018

Want to learn how to bask in life's greatness, **achieve lasting contentment**, and wake up each day full of gratitude and joy? Hey, us too—let's dive in together! (page 80)... **Maria Shriver** speaks candidly with Oprah about the challenge of finding your own happiness in the world (page 88)... I sandwich, you sandwich, we all sandwich our ice cream! If you're craving new variations on the **sweet stacked treat**, look no further (page 92)... Take a literary tour of the marvelous U.S.A., with stops out West, back East, up North, and down South—plus all the wide open spaces in between (page 98). Ready? Come on in, the water's fine!

PHOTOGRAPH BY
Stuart Fisher





WHAT WOULD

Seriously now, what would it take? Four million dollars? A committed relationship with Chris Pine? A job title that includes the word *chief*? What if you could start being more joyful right here, right now, for the low, low price of *free*? That's the goal thirty O staffers set for themselves this spring. How'd they do? Read on....



MAKE YOU HAPPY?

BY
Molly Simms

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
Beth Hoeckel





I WASN'T ROCKET SCIENCE. My coworkers and I had signed up for a monthlong course that would allegedly turn us into happier people, and I was crushing it. The assignments were, to put it kindly, basic—things a needlepoint pillow or a kindergarten teacher could recommend: Be kind, look on the bright side, say thank you.

But it *was* science. A Yale psychology professor, Laurie Santos, had created the course, grounding it in measurable research. (She adapted it from Psychology and the Good Life, her spring 2018 class that nearly 25 percent of Yale undergrads signed up for, making it the most popular in the school's history.) According to decades' worth of studies, if we could spend a month living in accordance with the platitudes on pillows, we could expect to be more joyful.

Was I buying it? Not especially. In a world as rotten and rank as ours can be—where schoolkids are gunned down weekly, elephants are slaughtered for their tusks, women are trafficked like cocaine, and oceans are rapidly filling with flushable toilet wipes—is happiness even something reasonable to strive for? Aren't humans just bags of blood randomly ping-pong around the planet until we all become compost?

Santos doesn't think so. She believes we're entitled to, and capable of, much more joy than we've settled for. "The data suggest that becoming happier is a lot like learning to play the violin or row crew," she says. "They're not impossible to do. You just have to commit to practicing." Santos (whose laid-back affect, wild curtain of curly hair, and liberal referencing of Beyoncé make her seem more like an undergrad herself than the head of one of Yale's 14 residential colleges) calls her assignments "rewirements"—a play on college "requirements"—since they have been proved to retrain our thinking. "I also tell my class they can get a happiness boost from deleting their social media accounts," she says, "but not a lot of them take me up on that."

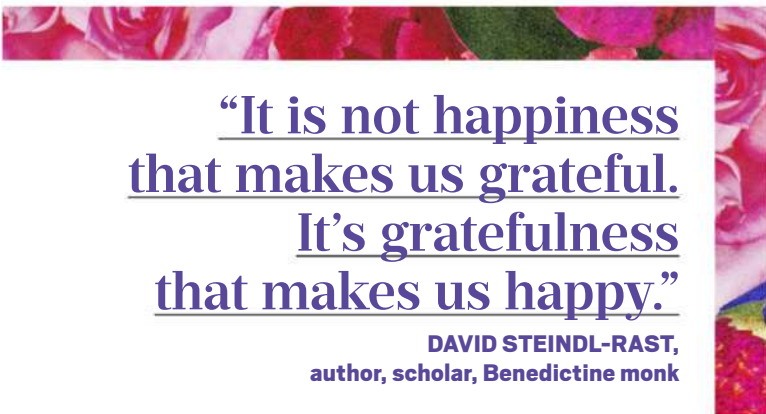
Weeks 1 through 3 had been a breeze. We started with a few self-assessment tests (the multiple-choice options ranged from "I feel like a failure" to "As I look back on my life, all I see are victories"), then spent the first week making lists of things we were grateful for, as well as savoring special moments. The next, we focused on social connections and acts of kindness, then devoted the third to getting more sleep and exercise.

Reading over the assignments, I had suppressed the world's loudest "duh." But knowing we'd be accountable at the end of the experiment, I diligently filled my notebook with moments of mindfulness, truly appreciating my Thai food and wisecracking with my boyfriend. ("I am savoring you!" I yelled to a friend over the racket at a party, as we sipped old-fashioneds.) And I had to admit how stirring it was to be fully present. It felt almost like double enjoyment, since I got the immediate pleasure, then the pleasure of reflecting on the pleasure. "Sadly, it's hard to savor things in our culture," says Santos. "You buy this fancy pastry because you want to enjoy it, but then you wolf it down while checking your email, and you don't even notice it."

Keeping a gratitude journal, that feel-good chestnut, is similarly based on mindfulness—and was solidly



IN A 2012 NEW ZEALAND STUDY, researchers found that the following behaviors enhanced enjoyment of an event: talking to another person about how good you feel, thinking about how lucky you are, thinking about recapping the experience for others, laughing, telling yourself how proud you are, and focusing on the present. What destroyed the moment? Thinking about when the experience would be over, pondering how nothing lasts forever, and telling yourself you don't deserve it.



"It is not happiness that makes us grateful. It's gratefulness that makes us happy."

**DAVID STEINDL-RAST,
author, scholar, Benedictine monk**



Subjects in a 2006 Japanese study boosted their attitude by merely thinking about kind acts they'd done that week.

A Duke professor and her colleagues discovered in 2001 that among adults with coronary artery disease, the risk of cardiac death was 2.4 times higher for those who were socially isolated than for their socially connected peers.

In a 2003 study from the University of California, Davis, participants who were asked to keep regular gratitude lists—in contrast to those who were asked to write down their “hassles”—were not only happier overall, but they experienced fewer symptoms of physical illness and exercised nearly one and a half hours more per week.

been-there-done-that to much of Team O. “I’ve gratitude-journaled before,” more than one staffer said smugly, already familiar enough with the concept to turn it into a verb. I hid my phone from view as I typed out my list on the subway, worried other passengers would sneer at my earnest paeans to my cats and the morning sunshine in my kitchen. “This exercise really resonates with some people, and others find it a little cheesy, which is fine,” says Santos. “But done even five or ten minutes a day, it can have a big effect. It’s less about writing things down and more about having time to sit and reexperience what you’re grateful for.”

We also kept careful tallies of the daily “random acts of kindness” we had to complete. In an attempt to clear this

section from my docket, I went online and made a bunch of donations to animal charities. Maybe a little lame—especially compared with one kintically nice O staffer who chastised herself for not being even nicer (“When I looked at my notes,” she said, “I realized I was way behind. It was like, *Girl, you did two kind things, and you were awake for how many hours?*”)—but I still felt like I’d earned a gold star. Research shows this habit offers a veritable combo platter of emotional benefits, since it often involves social connection *and* reinforces our image of ourselves as do-gooders.

I breezed through the assignment requiring us to engage with strangers and faraway relatives in order to enhance our social network. Meanwhile, the shy folk

According to the
Anxiety and
Depression
Association of
America,

40
million

adults in the
U.S. (about
18.1 percent of
the population)
suffer from
anxiety
disorders.



among us looked stricken by the idea of chatting up fellow shoppers in line at Whole Foods. “That’s because the mind lies to us,” Santos says. “The data suggest that social connections extend our life-span, help us fight off disease, even make us enjoy what we eat more. Yet when you tell people to talk to strangers, they think, *This is gonna be horrible*. But people are excited that you want to relate to them. By and large, the practice makes us feel better.”

Week 3—the exercise and sleep week—was right up

my alley; the older I get, the more both seem like nonnegotiables. Without regular exercise, I’m cranky and sluggish, and while Gayle King famously thrives on only four hours of shut-eye per night, those catnaps would turn me into a serial killer within weeks. Our wellness-obsessed staff wasn’t especially shocked to learn that being good to your body would have an impact on your outlook. Still, they had a litany of excuses for skipping the sleep-and-exercise homework: toddlers, the draw of an iPhone screen, visiting family, wine (which was name-



IN A 1987 UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER STUDY, researchers found that exercise significantly decreased depression in women who'd been clinically diagnosed. The results were the same whether the exercise was aerobic (like running) or solely weight lifting. Exercise has also been shown to decrease certain schizophrenia symptoms.

checked more times than God at a country music awards show). I felt so bad for them as I lay down for a snooze.

THEN CAME WEEK 4. But before I get into that, I have to ask: Who would pass up a chance to be infused with more mind-expanding, heart-opening grace? Plenty of us. Humans seem to love griping about being miserable and stressed, but apparently relatively few of us want to put in the work to escape those states. To wit: If any group should have been perfectly suited for this happiness project, it was the *O* staff. Promoting joy through gratitude, exercise, connection, meditation, and self-awareness is kind of our thing. But of the 86 people on staff at *O*, only 32 signed up for the experiment. And while the assignments

were cost-free and brief, many of the 32 trudged along sullenly like teens on a family vacation. In the end, half actually gave up; only 15 would make it through the final week. "I was very into it when I started," said one editor. "But I quit almost immediately. When I got burned-out, it was the first thing to go—almost like I'm too unhappy to try to be happy."

When I asked Santos to explain our lackluster participation, she was sympathetic. "About 50 percent of our happiness is genetic," she told me. "So yes, some people are predisposed to being unhappy, and they might not think it's worth it to seek out these resources, or even realize they *could* feel better. People also assume that our mood is dictated mostly by what happens to us, but that's only 10 percent of it. The good news is that 40 percent of our happiness is under our conscious control, and 40 percent is a lot. It's just a matter of doing the work.

"Any change is difficult, even small ones you know you need to make," Santos continued. "That's why everybody's New Year's resolutions fall by the wayside. How many of these habits do I regularly do? Far less than I'd like to admit. And I *teach* this class." There seems to be a Grand Canyon-size gulf between knowing what will make us happy and following through.

On top of this, we're also susceptible to distracting

cultural dictates about where happiness lies. So much of what we think we need to be truly ecstatic—a vacation home, a new romance, a Beemer, a butt that looks like two grapefruit halves (things *O* staffers sheepishly admitted craving)—makes little to no lasting impact on our overall life satisfaction, says Santos. She calls our habit of fixating on these false idols "miswanting" and, in her course, regularly lays out the "annoying features of the mind" that tempt us toward temporary, often materialistic goals. "We're working toward the wrong things," she says. Eyeing a \$300 kimono online toward the end of our experiment, I thought, *This won't make me happier, so what's the point?* It was at once defeating and liberating.

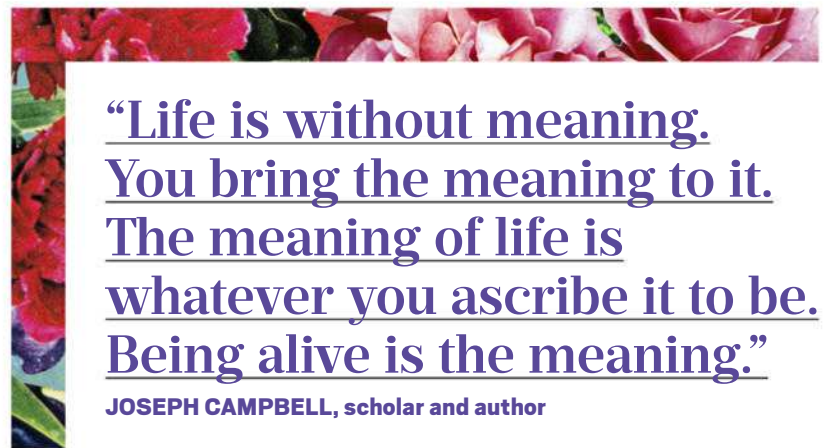
"Our minds are terrible at accurately predicting what will make us happy," says Santos. "I think that's why humans have historically needed religion and faith. Those traditions push us in the direction of doing acts of charity, having gratitude, being in communities where we connect with people—all things that give us a boost. Luckily, nonbelievers can get a boost from those habits, too." Being one of those godless heathens, I was happy to hear that even I could benefit.

As the 32—and eventually 15—of us made our way through our month of happiness tasks, evidence piled up that they were, in fact, providing solid little bursts of joy. "I was lonely over the weekend, but instead of holing up in my apartment and giving myself a facial, I invited a newish friend out to dinner," one editor said with a look approaching awe. "And after hanging out with her, I felt better!" That general sentiment, a bewildered "I feel better," was echoing across the office. We all know that being nice makes you happier and being happier makes you nice (and water is wet, and French fries are delicious), but as we tackled each assignment, staffers were consistently surprised by how well the rewirements worked their magic. At the close

By the end of our monthlong experiment,

53 percent

of *O* staffers who signed up had gone AWOL.



"Life is without meaning. You bring the meaning to it. The meaning of life is whatever you ascribe it to be. Being alive is the meaning."

JOSEPH CAMPBELL, scholar and author



of the project, the last 15 standing retook our self-assessments—and found that our mean scores had gone up in every category.

The experiment shined a beam of light on how lucky most of us already are, and shifted our focus onto what matters. “The gratitude-themed stuff made me realize how secure I am, after years of feeling shaky and worried all the time,” said one staffer. “I used to be so terrified about some *thing* coming for me, like a huge bill in the mail or getting fired. But when I pulled back, I could see that this is the happiest I’ve been in a very long time, maybe ever.” Sometimes being happy is just a matter of recognizing that you’re happy.

Going home on a packed, malfunctioning subway sometime during week 3, I encountered an oblivious passenger womanspreading into my space with her pointy boots and overstuffed tote. I imagined jabbing her with an elbow, thinking, *This selfish jerk thinks she owns the train*. Then I was greeted with a bracing notion, as if

my brain had taken a sip of vinegar. *Why are you so angry?*, I wondered. *What if you just gave her a break?* I sat in that feeling, awkwardly. It was as if I’d been infected by the experiment. What if all of us cut one another a break? How different would the world be if we were several notches closer to compassion, or—okay, fine—happiness?

NOW BACK TO WEEK 4. We were supposed to meditate ten minutes per day, a task that some, including myself, found frustrating, confounding, and nearly undoable. “The hindrances to meditating can be a lack of time or sleepiness,” says Santos. “But a major one is ‘ill will,’ when, midway through, you’re filled with intrusive thoughts like *What’s the point of this?* As you do it more often, you’ll notice that, accept it, and keep going.”

So I’ll probably never be a meditation master. But I had other things to worry about, namely our final task, an emotional Everest: Take 30 minutes to write a “gratitude



A SMALL 2018 STUDY by Michigan Tech researchers found that a single introductory guided-meditation session gave participants a significant reduction in anxiety—which lasted for up to a week.

**“Do a good turn
to someone
every day: that is...
be a giver
and not a taker.”**

JULIETTE G. LOW, founder of the Girl Scouts

letter” to someone we’d never had a chance to thank. Then, without warning, read it to that someone—ideally in person. *O* staffers fretted over how to deliver something so intimate. I debated for days before nervously selecting a teacher I’d been close with: Nancy, the exacting, sardonic leader of our high school drama club, where I’d once spent countless extracurricular hours. (Go ahead, ask me to sing anything from *West Side Story*.) We arranged to FaceTime on a Sunday morning; she and I hadn’t spoken in almost 20 years, and I was preparing myself for an award-winningly weird conversation.

After we caught up, I explained my mission. “Oh boy. Should I grab tissues?” Nancy said, chuckling. I launched into the letter, talking about when we met freshman year: “You were, and probably still are, a demanding figure. But your insistence on getting the best out of us felt like a form of true respect, and it made me step up in ways I hadn’t thought I was capable of.” I started verbally stumbling, too teary to read my screen properly. I looked up to see her eyes flooded, too. When I finished, Nancy buried her face in her hands, her shoulders shaking. I thought about the nearly 40 years she’s spent teaching—the infinite nights I painted scenery alongside her as we listened to Bonnie Raitt on a boom box, the thousands of kids she’s pushed and bolstered the way she did me, the insufficient thanks she’s received. At that moment, we were tied together by a cord of memory, reaching each other through lost time, sending and retrieving a torrent of positive energy. *I don’t know what the meaning of life is*, I thought, *but maybe it’s something like this*.

“My God, what a beautiful letter,” Nancy said, wiping her eyes. “I can’t tell you how good that makes me feel to hear. But did reading that make *you* feel happy?”

It did. It really, really did.

READY TO IMPROVE YOUR OUTLOOK? Try this experiment yourself by visiting oprah.com/gethappy.

BECOME THE THING

Elizabeth Gilbert reveals the source of true joy: sinking fully into what makes you you (obligations be damned).

I WAS 16 YEARS OLD the day I skipped school for the first time. It was easily done: Both my parents left for work before my school bus arrived, so when it showed up at my house on that cold winter morning, I simply did not get on. The perfect crime!

And what did I do with myself on that glorious stolen day, with no adult supervision and no limits on my activities? Did I get high? Have sex? Hit the mall for a shoplifting extravaganza?

Nope. I built a toasty fire in the wood stove, prepared a bowl of popcorn, grabbed a blanket, and read. I was thrilled and transported by a book—it was Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises*—and I just needed to be alone with it for a little while. I ached to know what would happen to Jake Barnes and Lady Brett Ashley and Robert Cohn. I couldn’t bear the thought of sitting in a classroom taking another biology exam when I could be traveling through Spain in the 1920s with a bunch of glamorous but doomed expatriates.

I spent that day lost in words. Time fell away, as the room around me turned to mist, and my role in the world (as a daughter, sister, teenager, student) no longer had any meaning. I had accidentally stumbled upon the key to perfect happiness: I had become completely absorbed by something I loved.

Please note that absorption is not the same as distraction or obsession. To be absorbed by something is to become it. I became the characters in *The Sun Also Rises* that day, as I lived and breathed and loved and died with them. When I came out of that rapture, I was richer for it.

To be distracted by something is also to disappear, but not in a good way. It’s true, for instance, that when we spend hours distracted by our smartphones, we become nothing at all. We don’t get enriched; we just get erased. When we snap out of that electronic daze, all we feel is more lost and empty. And to be obsessed by something, finally, is to become consumed and destroyed by it. (All addicts are obsessives—hungry ghosts, constantly being eaten alive by their addiction.)

So the trick to happiness, then, is to find something that absorbs you and

become that thing by pursuing it with devoted attention. In order for this trick to work, however, your only motive for the pursuit must be pure love. As a young person, I devoted myself to reading simply because I loved it. Any other motive (the desire for recognition or wealth or power, for instance) would’ve turned my absorption into distraction or obsession—and that wouldn’t have led me into happiness.

Looking back on it now, I can see that some subtle things were happening to my mind (and to my life) while I was in that state of absorption. Hemingway’s language was quietly braiding itself into my imagination. I was downloading information about how to create simple and elegant sentences, a good and solid plot. In other words, I was learning how to write. Without realizing it, I was hot on the trail of my own destiny. My happiness should’ve been a clue that I was pointed in the right direction; it always is. Writing now absorbs me the way reading once did. (Well, actually, both still absorb me.)

By the way, I totally got busted that day. The principal called my mom at work, and my mom called home, and I—like a dummy—answered the phone. (I am not cut out for a life of crime.) I got in big trouble. Certainly nobody believed that I had skipped school merely to read. So, yeah, I got grounded for two weeks, but it was worth it, because something more important was happening: I was getting grounded—deeply grounded in the sacred field of my own becoming.

I am writing this essay more than 30 years later. Once again I am sitting alone in a quiet house, snuggled next to a fire, absorbed by language. I am just as happy right in this moment as I was on that day in 1986. In the more than three decades since, I have tried so many other things to make myself happy (sex, love, adventures, travel, food, money, wine, shoes, ambition), but nothing works better than this. I cannot be more authentically myself than I am right now.

Soon I will put another log on the fire, and then write another page—or read or study or edit another page. If I ever find anything better to do with my time than this, I’ll get back to you. Till then, let the great world spin, because loving absorption is mine, and happiness its generous side effect.



AN OPEN BOOK

For much of her life, Maria Shriver has felt defined by the roles of daughter, wife, mother, and all things Kennedy/Shriver. But after some monumental losses—the deaths of her parents and uncle, the end of her marriage—the now empty-nester sees chances for a rich new chapter.



I felt lost a lot growing up because I was always a “Kennedy,” without a first name or my own identity, really. People would ask me, “Which Kennedy are you?” I always felt that they were more interested in the things that came before me than in getting to know me.

BEFORE I GO TO SLEEP at night, there are a few books I turn to for calm and comfort. Recently I added a new volume: Maria Shriver’s *I’ve Been Thinking: Reflections, Prayers, and Meditations for a Meaningful Life*. It’s a big-hearted chronicle of her personal journey toward a deeper understanding of what she’s been put on earth to do. Yes, as blessed as Maria’s been, she struggles, like the rest of us, with how to step into the unknown with courage and openness. I’ve been friends with Maria since 1978, when we worked at the same Baltimore television station, so sitting down with her felt more like a girls’ night out than an interview, as we compared notes on aging, grief, identity, politics, and her evolving definition of happiness.

Oprah: Maria, as I prepared to talk with you, I reread every page of your book. It’s so beautifully conceived. I love the way it unfolds from nugget to nugget: “I Am Who I Choose to Become,” “Seeing the Jewel Inside,” “Working on ‘Intestinal Fortitude,’” “The Power of Letting Go.” You’ve been doing a lot of reflecting!

Maria Shriver: When I travel around talking to people, I realize that everybody seems to be thinking about, or is in, transition—they’re contemplating big questions just as I am. They tell me they’ve just graduated from high school and they’re anxious about what’s next. Or they’ve just finished college and don’t know what their passion is yet. Women tell me they’ve left careers to raise children and aren’t sure who they are anymore. If later they want to get back into the workforce, they’re not sure they’ll be able to.



Like me, some have recently lost parents or separated from spouses. Or they’re concerned about what’s happening in the country. There’s a huge upheaval, and people are wondering how to make sense of it.

OW: People are seeking direction. They’re looking for the rod and the staff.

MS: What’s good about all the turmoil is that it’s producing great conversations. People want to talk, they want to connect—they want to feel the joy in that.

OW: You told me you did an event to promote the book and were shocked by how many people were there. You thought you were in the wrong place! That surprises me.

MS: I’m used to crowds, but not crowds who are there for me. I’m more accustomed to being invisible in a room.

OW: What do you mean, “invisible”?

MS: Well, in the past I didn’t give up much of myself. I’ve spoken on behalf of others—I urged people to vote, to cure Alzheimer’s, to work for the disabled. But I didn’t say “I have anxiety. I worry about this or that. *I’m* grieving.” In the book, I’ve shared more of me. It’s hard to make yourself vulnerable, but it also feels good.

OW: Why do you think that is?

MS: I felt lost a lot growing up because I was always a “Kennedy,” without a first name or my own identity, really. People would ask me, “Which Kennedy are you?” I always



felt that they were more interested in the things that came before me than in getting to know *me*. I was determined to become Maria.

OW: Your mother, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, struggled with some of that, too. Her brothers got all the attention, no matter the great things she was doing. She passed away in 2009. What was it like being her daughter?

MS: It was awesome, because she was. And it was challenging, because she was a force of nature. She thought everyone could change the world and had no interest in you unless that's what you were doing. She dressed like a man and always had pencils stuck in her hair. She smoked cigars, carried a briefcase, and went to the office every day. She loved power and respected people who worked nonstop. It forced me to perform at a high level.

OW: You spoke to your mother every single day. Gayle was the same way with her mom. I would wonder, *What can they be talking about?*

MS: I didn't make a move without her. Talking stuff through with her calmed me as nothing else could. I'd heard people say that you're not a full-fledged woman until your mother passes. From the time I was little, I worried that I wouldn't be able to survive without my mother, but I have. I'm proud that I'm standing—and that I'm softer and more open, too.



I feel very alive now, at age 62, which is a surprise to me.

OW: I remember in 2004, when the tsunami in Indonesia was all over the news, I was on vacation in the Bahamas; you were on holiday in California. I was lolling on a boat, and suddenly there's a woman furiously paddling out in a dinghy, wearing a bathing cap. She grabs onto the side of my boat and says: "You have to do something for these people! No more time for vacation. You and Maria could be putting together a fundraiser." It was your mother.

MS: I told her I couldn't believe she did that! She called me to say the same thing: "You and Oprah need to get moving on this!" Growing up, we didn't take real vacations. If we went anywhere as a family, it was on a service mission of some kind. It was both fascinating and exhausting.

OW: You write about the losses you suffered in quick succession: your mother and your uncle Teddy in one month in 2009, your father in 2011, and also that year the breakup with your husband.

MS: Yes, it all brought me to my knees. I describe that period as "marinating in grief."

OW: What got you through it?

MS: I have four children. I want them to see me as someone who can survive anything because that's what they're going to have to do.

OW: Is it important to talk about your pain?

MS: We're a grief-illiterate nation. Listening to others and sharing the depths of our own suffering helps us feel seen. I want to do more of that, as I've begun with my new nonprofit, the Women's Alzheimer's Movement.

OW: I've seen you become an even more solid friend over these last few years. You check in with me regularly just to see how I am.

MS: I'd depended so much on my mother, but after she died, I had to reach out more to friends and say things like, "Can I come over for dinner?"

OW: You talk about how, in this dark time—all the divisiveness, the meanness—we have to look for the light in the cracks. Have you ever thought about running for office?

MS: I used to feel my mother wouldn't think I was great unless I jumped in and ran, like the boys. But I don't feel that now—it's just not in my heart. I have a voice, and I think I'm using it effectively. I feel very alive now, at age 62, which is a surprise to me.

OW: What does it mean to you to be happy?

MS: I call them "yippee!" moments. I feel them inside. They're different now; they're quieter. As we get older, we have to appreciate the less momentous things. My kids come over for dinner. Someone invites me somewhere. A person tells me I've helped them. It's not Disneyland. It's when a friend calls just to say hi and I realize how much we mean to each other.

OW: Maria, I'm right there with you. Yippee!



WHERE
ARE
YOU
GOING?





LIA DITTON, long-distance rower

Preparing to Cross the Pacific

As a kid, I was so introverted that I barely spoke. A teacher said I was like a turtle with my shell on my back—totally self-contained. In a way, that's still me; my rowboat is my home, my shell, and I'm vulnerable without it. Now I'm going to bring it across an ocean: In spring 2019, I plan to row from Japan to San Francisco. It'll take between four and six months to cross the 4,500 nautical miles, and I'm doing it alone.

At 21, I joined a crew in a yacht race—it was an adventure I couldn't pass up. I became a pro boat racer, then heard about a woman who sailed long distances on her own. In that moment, everything clicked.

After I sailed the Atlantic solo in 2005,

I found out that 17 solo attempts had been made to row west to east across the Pacific, and only two Frenchmen had been successful. I wondered why so many people had failed, and dared to consider trying it myself. If you think about the journey as a whole, it's almost stupefying. Small boat, big distance. The fear nearly did me in. But the reality is actually pretty mundane: You wake up, you row, you sleep, you wake up, you row.

My solar-powered desalinator makes seawater drinkable, and I'll eat mostly dry, nutrient-dense food: jerky, nuts, as much Parmesan as I can fit on board, and chocolate, for calories and morale. And I'll be taking about 150 audiobooks. Nothing highbrow. People

always think I'm going to learn Spanish or something, but actually, I prefer good bonkbusters—trashy novels with tons of sex scenes. I'll sleep in a narrow channel on the floor of the boat. Unsurprisingly, when I'm on the ocean, the thing I wish for most is a real bed with pillows. Oh my God, pillows!

Sometimes I have trouble integrating with the rest of society. Still, I've been bowled over by the support, messages, and crowdfunding I've received from strangers and friends (even those who fear they're helping me into a watery grave). I'm an island, like we all are. But by planning to cross an ocean alone, I've become more connected than ever to my fellow humans.

LAYERS

Here's the latest scoop on ice cream sandwiches: Vanilla-filled chocolate wafers are just a taste of what's possible. From sweet surprises on the outside to fresh flavors on the inside, these brilliant combinations are the stuff of dessert dreams.



COOLHAUS BALSAMIC FIG
AND MASCARPONE ICE CREAM



CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

"The flavor profile is very European, and the mix of chewy figs and sticky balsamic swirl makes for a complex twist."

COCONUT ICE CREAM



SHORTBREAD
COOKIES

"The richness of both the coconut and the buttery cookies creates the ultimate indulgence."

WE ALL SCREAM
FOR IT...

but these five sumptuous suggestions from Natasha Case, CEO of hip ice cream company Coolhaus (cool.haus for stores), will have you savoring in sublime silence.

OF LOVE

MANGO SORBET



SOFT GINGER COOKIES

"The spice of the ginger cuts the sweetness of the mango; you wind up with a tropical flavor that's so refreshing."

MINT CHOCOLATE CHIP ICE CREAM



DOUBLE CHOCOLATE COOKIES

"With a mint filling, you get an extra-cooling treat, while dark chocolate ensures that it's decadent but not too sugary."



STRAWBERRY ICE CREAM



SNICKERDOODLES

"This combo is reminiscent of strawberry shortcake."



PEACH COBBLER SANDWICH

They don't call fruit nature's candy for nothing: Peaches pump up the flavor (and texture) with no added sugar.



S'MORES SANDWICH

Chocolate lovers will appreciate this chilled-out version of the campfire classic. If you're a certified chocoholic, you can swap the marshmallows for crushed Oreos.



KEY LIME PIE SANDWICH

Tangy Greek yogurt gets hugged by two crisp cinnamon grahams in this lighter take on a Floridian favorite.



For recipes see page 97.



STOUT BROWNIE SANDWICHES

Think of these rich beauties as handheld brownie sundaes—and a rewarding use of your time.



**DOUBLE
CHOCOLATE
SORBET
SANDWICHES**

Blackberry sorbet
lends lightness to
this luscious chocolaty
stack—a frosty
fantasy come true.



Peach Cobbler Sandwiches

Stir 1/3 cup fresh or thawed-from-frozen **peach** slices, chopped, and 1/4 tsp. **cinnamon** into 1/2 cup slightly softened **vanilla ice cream**. Divide mixture between 2 squares of a **honey graham cracker**. Top each with another square. Freeze until firm, about 15 minutes. Makes 2 sandwiches.

S'mores Sandwiches

Stir 12 **mini marshmallows** into 1/2 cup slightly softened **chocolate ice cream**. Divide mixture between 2 squares of a **chocolate graham cracker**. Top each with another square. Freeze until firm, about 15 minutes. Makes 2 sandwiches.

Key Lime Pie Sandwiches

Mix 1/2 cup plain **Greek yogurt** and 1 Tbsp. **lime juice** (Key lime, if you can find it). Cover and freeze until it reaches a soft-serve-like consistency, about 30 minutes. Stir, then divide between 2 squares of a **cinnamon graham cracker**. Top each with another square. Freeze until firm, about 40 minutes. Makes 2 sandwiches.

Stout Brownie Sandwiches

Preheat oven to 350°. Line 2 (8" x 8") baking pans with parchment paper, leaving a 2" overhang on each side. Spray with nonstick cooking spray. In a large, microwave-safe bowl, put 4 ounces **semisweet chocolate chips** and 1/2 cup room-temperature unsalted **butter**. Microwave 15 seconds at a time, stirring, until melted. Slowly pour in 1/2 cup room-temperature stout or other dark **beer**. Mix until combined and set aside. In a medium bowl, sift together 1 cup all-purpose **flour**, 1/4 cup unsweetened **cocoa powder**, and 1/2 tsp. kosher **salt**. In a small bowl, whisk together 2 room-temperature large **eggs**, 1 cup **sugar**, and 1 tsp. **vanilla extract**. Fold into chocolate mixture. Add dry ingredients to bowl all at once and mix. Divide batter evenly between prepared pans. Bake until top is flaky and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, about 18 minutes. Remove from oven. When pans are cool enough to handle, freeze for 30 minutes, then remove. Over one brownie pan, spread 2 pints softened **chocolate chip ice cream**. Carefully remove brownie square from second pan and place

atop ice cream. Freeze until firm, about 2 hours. Then use parchment paper overhang to lift from pan and place on a cutting board. Cut into circles or squares. Makes about 10 sandwiches.

Double Chocolate Sorbet Sandwiches

Preheat oven to 350°. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. In a large bowl, use a mixer to beat 1/2 cup unsalted **butter**, softened; 1/2 cup **sugar**; and 1/2 cup packed **brown sugar** until light and fluffy. Add 1 room-temperature large **egg** and 1 tsp. **vanilla extract**; beat until well combined. In a medium bowl, sift together 3/4 cup all-purpose **flour**, 1/4 cup unsweetened **cocoa powder**, and 1/2 tsp. each **baking soda** and **baking powder**. Fold in 1/2 tsp. flaky **sea salt**. Add dry ingredients to wet and beat on low until just combined; do not overmix. Fold in 1 cup **semisweet chocolate chips**. Spoon dough in 2 Tbsp. rounds, each 2" apart, on prepared baking sheet. Bake until slightly firm in center, about 12 minutes. Remove from oven and cool on racks. When completely cooled, scoop 1/4 cup **blackberry sorbet** onto cookie halves. Sandwich cookies together and freeze until firm, about 30 minutes. Makes 10 sandwiches.



Non-Dairy Queens

These new plant-based offerings make fine fillings for your sandwich creations.

Ben & Jerry's Non-Dairy P.B. & Cookies

As creamy as the real deal, this almond-based vanilla concoction delivers ribbons of crunchy peanut butter and chunks of chocolate sandwich cookies for a stuffing that'll hit most any spot. (\$8; benjerry.com for stores)

McConnell's Toasted Coconut Almond Chip

Pea protein (you're going to have to trust us) gives traditional texture to this salty-sweet mix of golden coconut shreds, roasted almonds, and bittersweet chocolate chips. (\$12; mconnells.com)

Mud Chocolate Coconut Mousse

This dreamy dessert contains no extra sweeteners—just coconut cream, dates, cashews, and cacao. Which means there's no reason why you shouldn't eat it every night this summer. (\$28 for a three-pack; eatmud.com)

DOUBLE TAKE

Want a 'wich that wows? Take a tip from Katie Jacobs, entertainment expert and author of *So Much to Celebrate*, and serve your ice cream between two of these unexpected goodies.



WAFFLES

"Belgian waffles are a home run," Jacobs says. "They're airier than cookies but not as sweet." She recommends rolling the sides of your sandwich in chopped pistachios for extra texture. If you don't want to make your own waffles, Birch Benders' new Paleo Toaster version (\$4; birchbenders.com for stores) achieves the right crispy chewiness.



MINI PIES

Make mini berry or cherry pies: Top a 3" round piece of store-bought pie dough with pie filling, top with another piece of pie dough, and crimp the edges before baking at 375° for 15 minutes. "It's like pie à la mode—a Southern staple," Jacobs says.



OATMEAL COOKIES

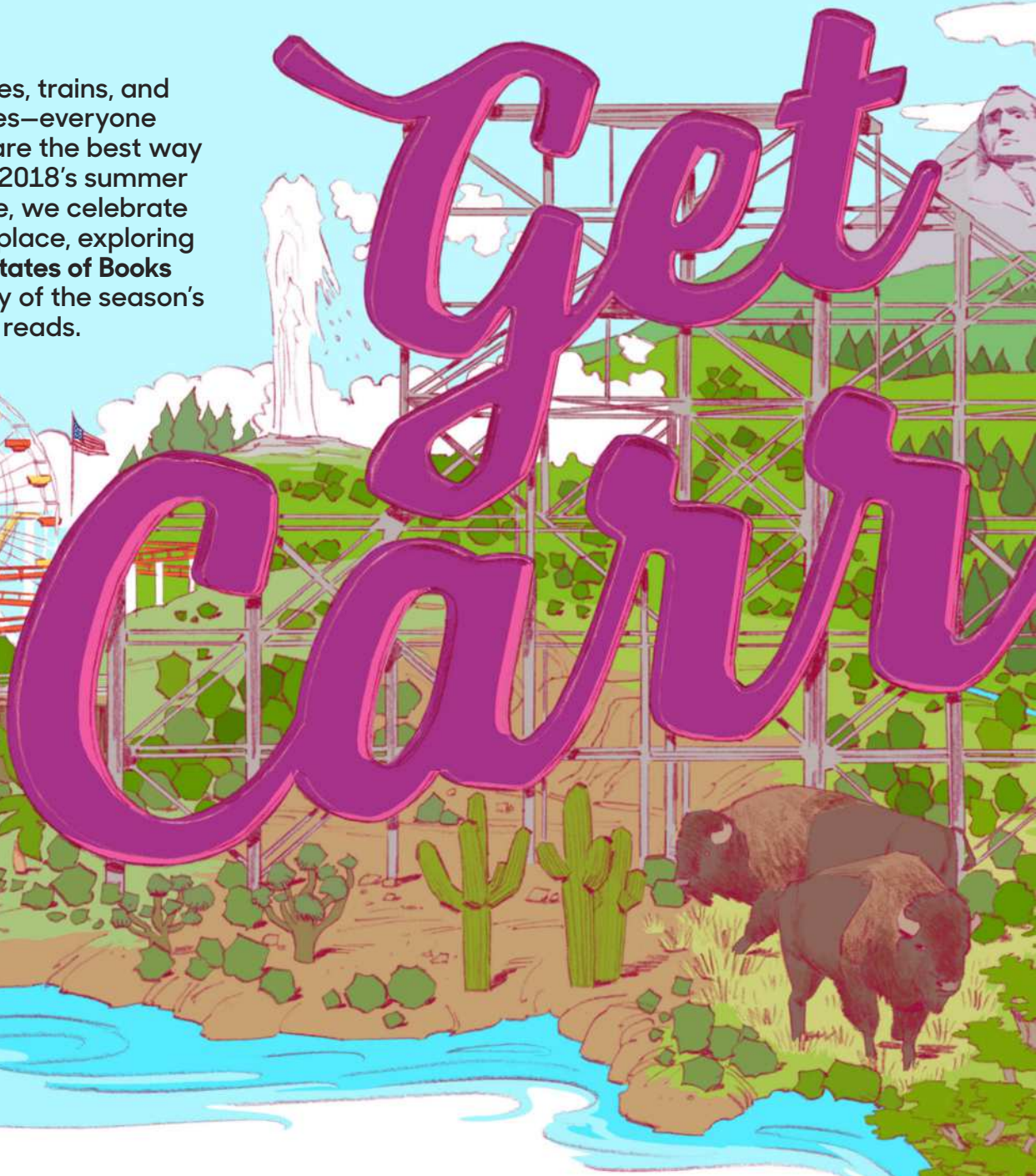
They're often overlooked, but their hearty texture is so satisfying with ice cream. "And if you add cinnamon to your cookie batter, they'll make coffee flavors pop," Jacobs says. "Dip half the sandwich in melted chocolate to take them over the top."



MACARONS

Update the iconic French dessert by replacing the cream filling with ice cream. Says Jacobs, "Pistachio, coffee, or raspberry macarons filled with corresponding ice cream flavors become little bites of frozen heaven."

Forget planes, trains, and automobiles—everyone knows books are the best way to travel. For 2018's summer reading guide, we celebrate the power of place, exploring the **United States of Books** in the company of the season's best reads.



WE FLOAT LIKE NATIONLESS ghosts across the internet and sometimes lose sight of how much we are still shaped by the random fact of where we were born. Of the land and the living our families pulled from it (or the cities we fled to when our families grew too annoying). It's not just our accent or which baseball team we root for or whether we drink Cheerwine or Moxie. It's also our stories—our legends and songs and jokes and prejudices, and yes, our literature. When we get up in the morning and begin our routine, it's easy to forget that the place we see every day isn't the whole world. But it's more important than ever to remember.

Some writers are particularly good at capturing place, and if that place is remote or peculiar enough, they become captured themselves, a little: E.B. White will always be linked to Maine, Joan Didion to L.A., Armistead Maupin to San Francisco. From reading their work, you can learn a lot about those places, but the association isn't totally fair. You would never confuse Jonathan Lethem's Brooklyn with Jacqueline Woodson's. William Faulkner's Gothic crumble of Jefferson, Mississippi, is light years away from the human urgency of Jesmyn Ward's Bois Sauvage, Mississippi. (Also important: Neither location actually exists; they are imagined worlds you can visit only through the truth-telling lies of fiction.)



I went on a literary pilgrimage once. A friend wanted to visit Faulkner's grave, so I agreed to drive from New York in my white Buick LeSabre and pick him up in Atlanta. From there we'd head to Oxford, Mississippi.

I'd never driven into the Deep South before. We rolled down the windows and took in the sights. When we reached Alabama, we pulled over at a barbecue pit in a gentleman's backyard. It was just a big outdoor chimney, with fire and pork inside. The pork butts rested on a ledge just above the fire. My companion didn't approve of the cook's technique. Simply setting pork butts ablaze is not actually barbecue, in his view. But then he sampled the end product. "It tastes good," he admitted.

"Maybe that's just how they do things here." We licked our fingers clean and got back in the car.

We crossed into Mississippi. Then there were hours of gazing out at the lush beauty of the countryside, the sky darkening, the light fading on the kudzu at a slightly different angle than I was used to, reminding me that, yes, you are on a different part of the earth.

We got to the cemetery late on a Sunday afternoon and spent 20 minutes looking around hopelessly for our hero's grave. It is not in my New England nature to ask for help, nor, for that matter, even to speak to another person if I can avoid it. But help was offered by a teenager doing lazy skateboard tricks in the middle of the road, who gave us directions

to the great man's final resting place. The kid was wearing slippers that looked like big, fuzzy monster feet.

It was embarrassing we hadn't found the spot ourselves because it was the one with all the empty whiskey bottles left in tribute. My friend opened the fifth he'd been saving, and we each took a swig. I couldn't stop thinking about that teenager. What was his life like, growing up here and now, in a blue college town surrounded by deep red, living on the edge of a graveyard? How did he pull off those skateboard tricks with those crazy slippers on? No Buick LeSabre could deliver me to that boy's life. That's why we have books.

—JOHN HODGMAN, author of *Vacationland*

The Northeast

Upstate

by JAMES WOOD

This crisply written comedy of manners follows a stodgy Englishman and his two grown daughters as they reckon with the harsh winter, quirky characters, and lock-and-load vibe of Saratoga Springs, New York. Woods, a literary critic and himself a British expat, offers a novel that's both exegesis and hosanna: "The sun was melting the snow—it sounded as if a hundred old taps were leaking—and the American sky was joyfully, piercingly, utterly blue."



Social Creature

by TARA ISABELLA BURTON

A chance encounter with a dizzyingly rich socialite catapults a struggling writer into Champagne picnics, Weimar Berlin-themed parties, opera, and the intoxicating possibility that all her literary dreams could come true. It's a bolt-of-lightning friendship that could happen to anyone, but only in the Big Apple, a city where nothing comes cheap.

PLACES in the HEART

"I have a soft spot for Bret Easton Ellis's *Glamorama*. The river of '90s New York names and nouns flowing through dates it, but in the best and most intentional way. The plot is over-the-top, which is brilliant for an over-the-top time. So while books like Joseph Mitchell's *Up in the Old Hotel* and Edith Wharton's *The House of Mirth* are the ultimate NYC showstoppers, there's something irresistible about Ellis's shallow circus."

—Sloane Crosley, author of *Look Alive Out There*

Old in Art School

by NELL PAINTER

At 64, Painter, a vaunted historian, retires from her professorship at Princeton to fulfill the promise of her name and pick up a brush. She charts her exhilarating journey—from a BFA student at Rutgers to a master's candidate at the Rhode Island School of Design—as "an 'emerging artist,' but in an old body," for whom "art stopped time."



Invitation to a Bonfire

by ADRIENNE CELT

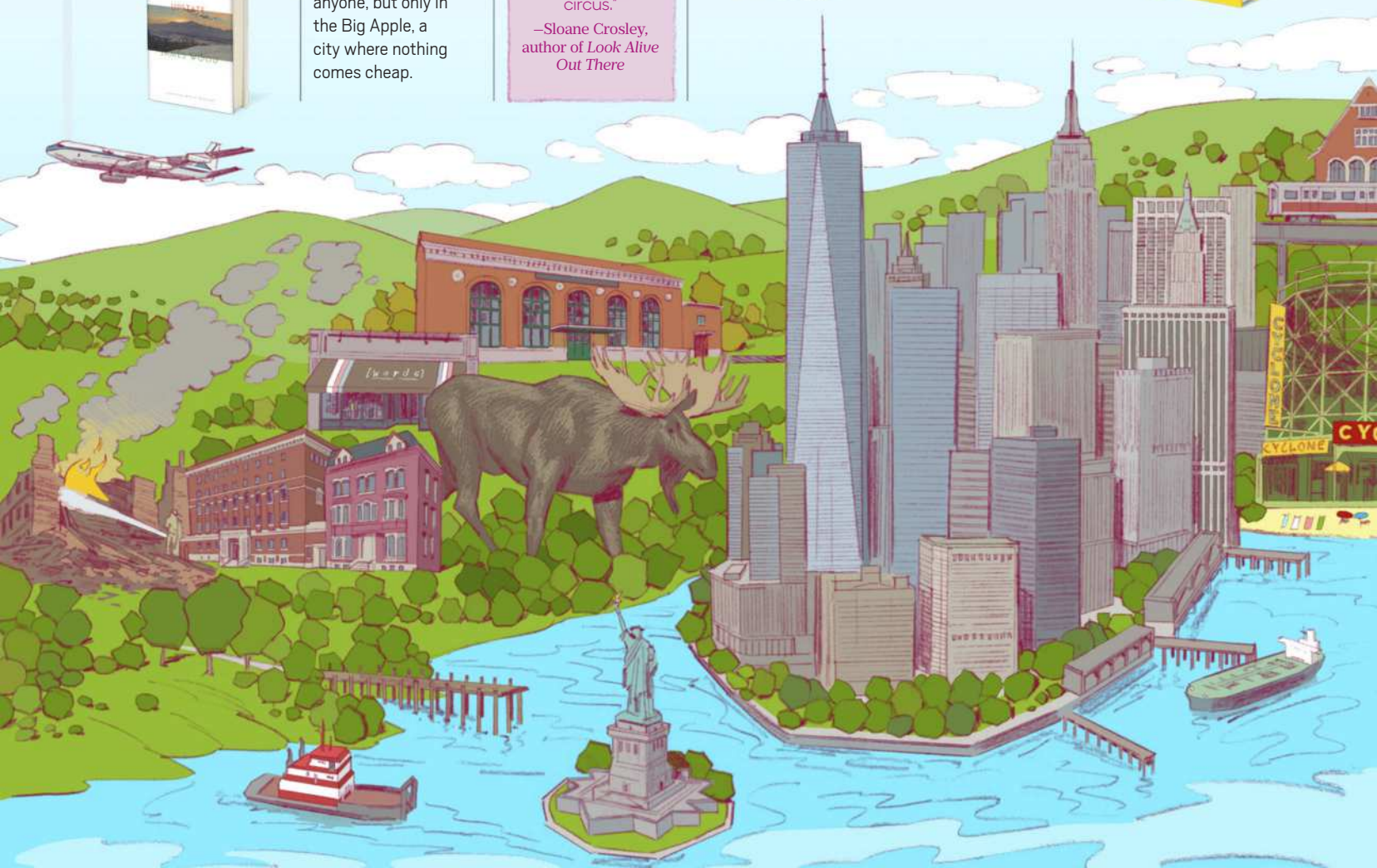
To Zoya Andropova, an orphan from rural Russia, suburban New Jersey appears covered in "sugar glaze," with "sweet and personal" houses marked by holly bushes and white picket fences. Yet the ingenue of this sultry novel feels like "a girl hollow with the knowledge that she still had no home." Enter Leo Orlov, Celt's spin on Vladimir Nabokov, who becomes the light of Zoya's life and the fire in her loins.



Days of Awe

by A.M. HOMES

The Manhattan fiction writer once observed that her characters say "the things we don't want to say out loud." In this exuberantly transgressive story collection, she skewers the vanities of the Hamptons plastic-surgery set (among them, men addicted to injecting themselves with Botox), a young Holocaust novelist's impostor syndrome, and a woman institutionalized for sticking herself with rose thorns, then dreaming of "walking on water."





How It Happened

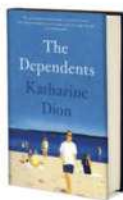
by MICHAEL KORYTA

Koryta drew on his experience as a private eye to craft this harrowing suspense novel set in Maine. After years away from the town where he spent his childhood summers, a popular seaside vacation spot shrouded by deep pine woods, FBI agent Rob Barrett returns to investigate the murders of the resident good girl and her boyfriend. Like a lighthouse casting its glow across the water, his search reveals the murkiness beneath Port Hope's placid surface.

No Ashes in the Fire

by DARNELL L. MOORE

Stranded in the urban battleground of Camden, New Jersey, amid "trash-lined corners, vacant lots, graffiti-tagged buildings," Moore struggles against a crush of bullying, bigotry, and self-loathing. He chronicles his odyssey in this piercingly vulnerable memoir, ultimately finding his way to LGBTQ activism and "black joy" through faith and family.



The Dependents

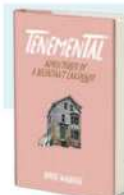
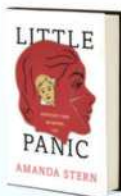
by KATHARINE DION

For Gene, who's lost his wife of 49 years, grief is an uphill trek through dense New Hampshire forest with no compass. Alone, he obsessively questions the past, especially this: Was Maida happy with him? Dion's resplendent debut ponders the fickleness of memory and the human propensity for nostalgia and self-doubt.

Little Panic

by AMANDA STERN

Stern's frank, funny memoir about living with anxiety—eased and compounded by a peripatetic childhood amid the gritty glamour of late-'70s Greenwich Village—will have chronic worrywarts laugh-crying with recognition, especially those who think clocks exist only to remind them that time's running out.



Tenemental

by VIKKI WARNER

Forget the marriage plot; 26-year-old Warner is after a plot of land. She buys a century-old triple-decker house in Providence's Federal Hill neighborhood, known for its Italian American community and its drug-addled ne'er-do-wells. In this ebullient memoir, she excavates the experiences of being landlady to that "needy bitch" of a house—plus tenants who "break bathtubs with sledgehammers," the permeating smell of reefer and sounds of Black Sabbath, and a late-night near debacle involving burnt toast.

Sick

by POROCHISTA KHAKPOUR

Journeying from Iran to the "Tehrangeles" of SoCal and then to New York ("the motherland for misfit creatures"), Khakpour is a citizen of the world but a foreigner in her own "Lyme-struck" body. Her searing memoir about trying to make peace with a chronic illness redefines both dislocation and belonging.





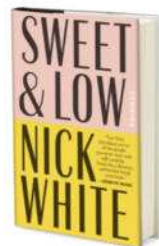
The South



Sweet & Low

by NICK WHITE

The Wild Turkey—soaked stories in White’s collection, including one about a quartet of bookish 30-somethings doing the horizontal fox-trot on a famous writer’s grave, are as sumptuous and darkly shimmering as the Mississippi, along which many of them are set. “Its bigness still surprised,” White writes of the sky above the delta. Likewise, the expansiveness here astounds.



Florida

by LAUREN GROFF

Slime mold, a father killed by snake venom, a mother haunted by a deadly panther, and half-feral little girls abandoned on an island—these bizarre happenings could be set only in the Sunshine State, and be written only by Groff, the Gabriel García Márquez of Gainesville. Reading as required as insect repellent in a swamp.



PLACES *in the* HEART

“*The Darkest Child* by Delores Phillips, a hidden gem, is the most complex rendering of the pre-civil rights South since *The Color Purple*. Tangy Mae is as plucky as *To Kill a Mockingbird*’s Scout, but also wise, vulnerable, and insightful about the ways that race, gender, color, and class come together to shape her life.”

—Tayari Jones, author of *An American Marriage*



Number One Chinese Restaurant

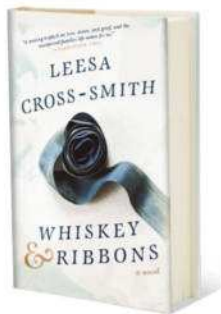
by LILLIAN LI

The American dream is served up with a side of hoisin sauce at the Beijing Duck House in Rockville, Maryland, where the grudges, love affairs, and family histories of three generations of employees reach a boiling point. A deliciously comic debut novel about secrets, scandal, and the patriotism at the heart of the hustle.

Whiskey & Ribbons

by LEESA CROSS-SMITH

Cross-Smith's melodic debut novel paints a nuanced portrait of Louisville, Kentucky, a Bible Belt city entangled in its own contradictions—churches scented like “communion wafers and baptism water;” characters overcome by passion and then nearly done in by loss. And it tenderly probes this question: After tragedy, can love come again?



Visible Empire

by HANNAH PITTARD

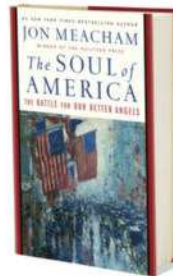
True story: On June 3, 1962, a flight carrying more than 100 of Atlanta's wealthiest residents crashed on takeoff from Paris. Pittard's kaleidoscopic novel, a fictionalized account of that disaster and its aftermath, illuminates the personal and communal grief (and, in some cases, wicked delight) of those left behind.



The Soul of America

by JON MEACHAM

The Pulitzer Prize–winning, Nashville–based biographer echoes the rhetoric of Abraham Lincoln and Sojourner Truth in his poignant secular sermon, spiraling outward from our civil rights ground zero, slavery. “To know what has come before is to be armed against despair,” observes Meacham, who stirringly recalls past moments of national crisis to prove that, eventually, light does peek through.



PLACES in the HEART

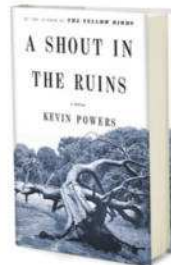
“Larry McMurtry’s novels were the first to show modern cowboys and ranch people as human beings with the same problems and flaws as the rest of us. His first three novels were recently released in a single volume, *Thalia*. I also hold the works of Native American novelist James Welch in high esteem, especially his brilliant and disturbing *Winter in the Blood* and *The Death of Jim Loney*.”

—Annie Proulx, author of *Barkskins*

A Shout in the Ruins

by KEVIN POWERS

Powers, a National Book Award finalist for his debut novel, *The Yellow Birds*, here confirms his Southern Gothic cred with an enthralling tale of a 90-something man who was born to slaves and is parsing his past from scattered clues. Spiced with Flannery O’Connor–esque flavor, this rich brew of a novel evokes the checkered history of antebellum Virginia via run-down plantations and twilight marshes, “the breadth of black water covered in shadow even at midday.”



The Midwest



The Removes

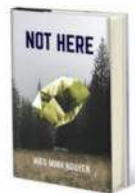
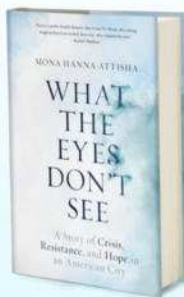
by TATJANA SOLI

Manifest Destiny meets our feminist moment as Soli conjures the layered lives of two women—a teenager abducted and then held for years by the Cheyenne and the straitlaced wife of General George Custer—as they rove and marvel at wind-whipped prairies: “There was one tree.... The tallest object for many miles around on the eastern side of the fort...when the wind blew, a perfect snowfall of seedpods flew in all directions.”

What the Eyes Don't See

by MONA HANNA-ATTISHA

The Iraqi American pediatrician who helped expose the Flint water crisis lays bare the bureaucratic bunk and flat-out injustice at the heart of the environmental disgrace—revealing, with the gripping intrigue of a Grisham thriller, “the story of a government poisoning its own citizens, and then lying about it.”



Not Here: Poems

by HIEU MINH NGUYEN

Nguyen's gorgeously raw lyricism reveals a man in between: navigating gentleness and fury; love and war; his own desires and “the lace-white landscape” of his mother's; and Saigon and Minneapolis, where “my grief / is a foreign currency,” where “white folks this far north either under-spice or over-spice their food like they're overcompensating for history.”

The Great Believers

by REBECCA MAKKAI

It's 1985, and Boystown, Chicago, is a playground for the gay community, with its nightclubs, dive joints, and leather-clad bartenders—though now the euphoria is tempered by terror. Yale Tishman is among those who look on helplessly as close friends succumb to AIDS, and when Yale's partner, too, becomes infected, his world collapses. Makkai's third novel, a devastating contemplation of love and loss, evokes the epidemic's horrors, yes, but also the profound acts of generosity it sparked.



PLACES in the HEART

“Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres* transformed my sense of the Iowa landscape. What had once seemed to me gentle fields of corn was revealed to be a toxic landscape with so much pesticide runoff that there were times it was dangerous to take showers or wash dishes. I had a completely fake pastoral view of the countryside; after reading that novel, I never did again.”

—Alexander Chee, author of *How to Write an Autobiographical Novel*





The Outsider

by STEPHEN KING

In Flint City, Oklahoma, a venerated Little League coach is accused of a bizarre murder, but while all evidence points to his guilt, he couldn't possibly have done the deed. What starts as a police procedural morphs into a supernatural thriller, a supremely Kingian stew of Americana with a dash of evil.



Reporter

by SEYMOUR M. HERSH

The Pulitzer-winning journalist who uncovered the My Lai massacre made his bones on Chicago's hardscrabble streets, not far from where his father had a dry-cleaning store. In this swashbuckling memoir, Hersh, now 81, recalls his epic career, including historic scoops during the civil rights era and Watergate. The early piece of reporting advice that started him on his way? "If your mother says she loves you, check it out."



PLACES *in the* HEART

"Winesburg, Ohio, by Sherwood Anderson, was published 99 years ago but still reveals plenty about the emotional tenor of the Midwest—the way neighbors do and don't show themselves to one another, the way we bury our yearning and frustrations under layers of platitudes and good (or bad) manners."

—Bonnie Jo Campbell, author of *Mothers, Tell Your Daughters*



Beautiful Music

by MICHAEL ZADOORIAN

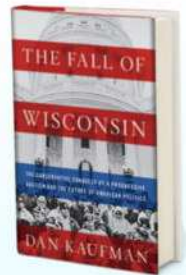
Danny Yzemeski tunes out a dysfunctional family with Frank Zappa and Iggy Pop, shaking his countercultural fist at The Man in this eight-track flashback of a novel set in 1970s Detroit: "The Electra behind me is impatient and he honks at me.... I'm not in the mood to be yelled at by anybody, so I turn up the string version of 'Break On Through' that's playing, flip him the bird, and take off with authority."



The Fall of Wisconsin

by DAN KAUFMAN

Kaufman burrows badgerlike into the politics of America's Dairyland, unearthing the personal histories of its people: an ironworker turned activist, a conservation biologist, a Native American tribal elder. In doing so, he reveals Wisconsin's transformation from a "pioneering beacon" of progressive policies, responsible for the nation's first worker's-comp and unemployment-insurance programs, to "a laboratory for corporate interests." Imagine Howard Zinn and Thomas Frank chewing the fat at a Packers game.





The West

Goodbye, Sweet Girl

by KELLY SUNDBERG

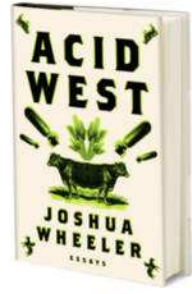
In this can't-take-your-eyes-off-the-page memoir, hard-bitten Idaho is a savage landscape "full of sawed-off mountains," nuclear waste, and wild animals just outside your door. But for Sundberg, the real danger shares her bed. How does a violent partner erode the terrain of your heart? And are you ever too old to run away from home?



I Will Be Complete

by GLEN DAVID GOLD

Abandoned in the 1970s at age 12, the author of this searching memoir, who also wrote the novel *Carter Beats the Devil*, spends the second and third decades of his life wending his way through the labyrinth of motherless San Francisco and eccentric Los Angeles. His game plan? Evade the violent con men and slippery-tongued psychiatrist his bohemian mom dated, and choose whether to drive down that "scenic road of forgiveness" or seize the self-determinist spirit of California and set himself free.



Acid West: Essays

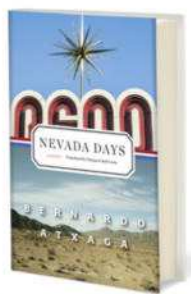
by JOSHUA WHEELER

Welcome to the trippy valleys of southern New Mexico, where one can experience close encounters with a post-Snowden UFO convention, a family's harrowing trials as atomic "downwinders," a desert scavenger hunt for cartridges of one of the worst video games ever made. Your guide: a loquacious wordsmith à la David Foster Wallace.

Nevada Days

BY BERNARDO ATXAGA

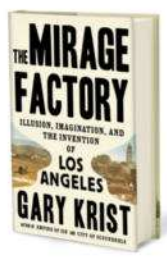
A mammoth eagle scoops up a car. A plane vanishes in a sun-bleached desert. The sublime meets the surreal in this hypnotic blend of memoir and fiction by the great Basque writer as he explores Reno, Nevada, an outpost teeming with David Lynch-like menace and haunted dreams.



The Mirage Factory

by GARY KRIST

"Every city can be regarded as an artificial construct, an audacious projection of human will, imagination, and vanity onto the natural landscape," begins this captivating history of Los Angeles, told through the lives of "Water Czar" William Mulholland, film director D.W. Griffith, and evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson. Through them we come to understand that this unlikelyst of metropolises could never have been built without the American capacity for self-mythologizing.



PLACES in the HEART

"*Fat City*, by Leonard Gardner, is a slim, sleazy, poetic, and basically perfect novel that captures the Day-Glo reality of Stockton, California, in the late 1950s—men lined up for jobs as day laborers, the bars and boulevards and boxers."

—Rachel Kushner, author of *The Mars Room*

Pretend I'm Dead

by JEN BEAGIN



A young housecleaner volunteering at a needle-exchange program falls for an addict trying to get clean.

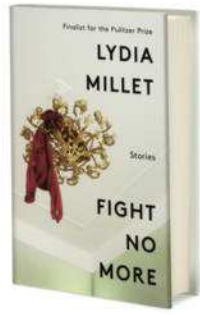
After "Mr. Disgusting" breaks her heart, she absconds to Valdez, New Mexico, a place as dry as Beagin's humor. Living in half of an adobe house that "leaned to one side in what seemed like shame or disappointment," she meets a cast of weirdos whom Beagin, channeling the late Denis Johnson, imbues with wondrous compassion.



Fight No More

by LYDIA MILLET

In the City of Angels, Nina's real estate clients are not exactly angelic: A musician tries to drown himself in the backyard pool at one viewing; a boy insists on watching porn during a showing of his home. The bemused Nina is at the core of these linked stories, which showcase Millet's gallows humor. The tales' intersections are as intricate as L.A.'s freeways—but, unlike the 405 at rush hour, totally delightful.

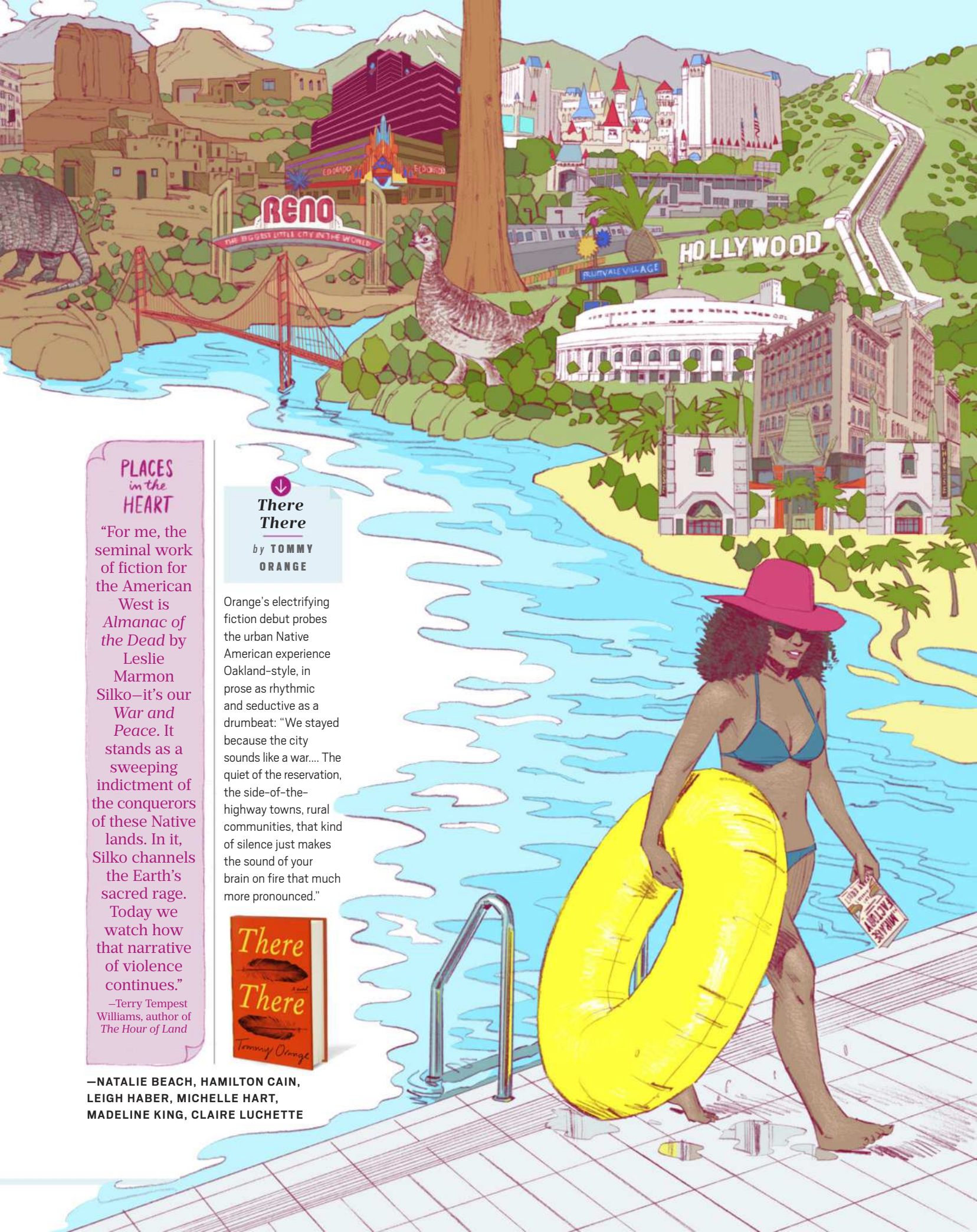


Tell the Machine Goodnight

by KATIE WILLIAMS

In this vivid, clever debut, it's 2035 and Bay Area tech geeks have finally cracked the code for joy: Meet the Apricity machine, named for the feeling of wintertime sun. Protagonist Pearl is an expert at giving customers personalized training for boosting their happiness quotient. But when it comes to helping her own troubled son, she's completely out of her depth.





**PLACES
in the
HEART**

“For me, the seminal work of fiction for the American West is *Almanac of the Dead* by Leslie Marmon Silko—it’s our *War and Peace*. It stands as a sweeping indictment of the conquerors of these Native lands. In it, Silko channels the Earth’s sacred rage. Today we watch how that narrative of violence continues.”

—Terry Tempest Williams, author of *The Hour of Land*



**There
There**

by **TOMMY
ORANGE**

Orange’s electrifying fiction debut probes the urban Native American experience Oakland-style, in prose as rhythmic and seductive as a drumbeat: “We stayed because the city sounds like a war.... The quiet of the reservation, the side-of-the-highway towns, rural communities, that kind of silence just makes the sound of your brain on fire that much more pronounced.”



—NATALIE BEACH, HAMILTON CAIN,
LEIGH HABER, MICHELLE HART,
MADLINE KING, CLAIRE LUCHETTE



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*in tastier terms: our first ingredient is whole almonds



Let's Eat!

GRAIN MAINS ♦ BREAKFAST BEAUTIES ♦ NOTABLE NOODLES

SINGULAR *Sensation*

A delicious celebration of one standout ingredient. This month: the comeback kids of the foodie scene, ancient grains.

RECIPES BY *Judy Kim*

FOOD STYLING: VICTORIA SEANOF

PHOTOGRAPH BY
Mike Garten



Why We Love Them

These days, every old grain is new again, and for the best reasons: Compared with modern grains like wheat and corn, ancient varieties like quinoa and amaranth tend to be less processed and contain more filling protein and fiber. Plus, they bring new textures and flavors to the table. Whether you use them to lend complexity to your morning cereal, add a healthy twist to homemade treats, or bulk up summer salads—as we did here—we think you'll agree that these oldies are goodies, indeed.



For moister, heartier banana bread or muffins, substitute half the recipe's all-purpose flour with **spelt**—it's a mild, nutty grain that keeps baked goods light.

Swap your same-old oatmeal for chewy, high-fiber **bulgur**—a parboiled whole wheat—and top with fruit and chopped nuts.

The earthy flavor and al dente texture of **farro** make for a more substantial, extra-special risotto.



Unless your **quinoa** comes pre-rinsed, run cold water over it for about a minute to help prevent a bitter or soapy taste.

Sausage, Corn, and Basil Millet Salad

MAKES 4 SERVINGS
TOTAL TIME: 35 MINUTES

- 6 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup millet
- 2¼ cups low-sodium chicken broth, divided
- 2 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup seasoned rice vinegar
- 1 pound sweet Italian sausage, casing removed, cut into ½" pieces
- 2 cups corn kernels
- 2 garlic cloves, finely minced
- 1 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- ½ tsp. ground black pepper
- ½ cup chopped parsley
- 5 ounces baby spinach
- ½ cup chopped basil
- Flaky sea salt, for finishing

1. In a large pot over medium-high heat, warm 1 tsp. oil. Add millet and toast until golden, about 5 minutes; transfer to a medium bowl and set aside. Add 2 cups chicken broth to pot and bring to a boil. Mix in toasted millet and 1 tsp. salt and cook according to package directions.

2. In a small bowl, combine red onion slices and vinegar. Set aside for at least 15 minutes.

3. In a large skillet over medium heat, cook sausage until cooked through and edges are golden, about 8 minutes, then transfer to a bowl. Deglaze skillet with remaining ¼ cup chicken broth; scrape with a wooden spatula. Stir in corn, garlic, red pepper flakes, 1 tsp. salt, black pepper, and 2 Tbsp. oil and sauté for 4 to 5 minutes. Fold in sausage, millet, and parsley until warmed through.

4. In a large bowl, toss spinach, basil, and warm millet mixture. Top with pickled onions and flaky sea salt. Mix reserved pickling liquid with ¼ cup oil; serve on the side as a dressing.



DID YOU KNOW?

You can get an extra flavor boost by grating rinsed and dried ginger with its skin on. (Organic is best, to avoid potentially harmful chemicals.)

Garlic Ginger Quinoa Salad

MAKES 4 SERVINGS
TOTAL TIME: 35 MINUTES

- 1 cup quinoa
- 1¼ tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 2 garlic cloves, grated
- 1 (½") piece ginger, peeled and grated
- 4 tsp. sugar
- 1 Tbsp. toasted sesame seeds
- 3 Tbsp. soy sauce
- 2 limes, zested and juiced
- ½ cup plus 1 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- ½ cup chopped cilantro, plus more for garnish
- ¼ cup chopped mint leaves, plus more for garnish
- 1 bunch asparagus, cut into 1" pieces
- 1 carrot, peeled and julienned (or cut into match sticks)
- 1 red pepper, cored and julienned
- 1 cup shredded red cabbage

1. In a large pot, bring water and quinoa to a boil. Add 1 tsp. salt and cook according to package directions. Set aside to cool.

2. In a small mixing bowl, combine garlic, ginger, sugar, sesame seeds, soy sauce, lime zest and juice, ½ cup oil, cilantro, and mint. Set aside.

3. In a medium skillet over medium-high heat, add 1 tsp. oil and asparagus; cook until lightly charred, about 5 minutes. Season with remaining ¼ tsp. salt.

4. In a large mixing bowl, toss together asparagus, carrot, red pepper, cabbage, and quinoa. Fold in half the dressing.

5. Serve on a platter and garnish with additional cilantro and mint, with remaining dressing on the side.

Fast or Fancy

» Stay cool on summer mornings with this acai bowl (a.k.a. spoonable smoothie) from *Power Bowls* author Christal Sczebel.

Leftover coconut flesh? Scoop it out and freeze it in chunks for smoothies.

To save time in the a.m., portion out the berries, bananas, and protein powder in a baggie in advance and freeze it. Then, just add to your blender with the acai and milk.

Protein powder gives your meal more staying power, and unflavored, unsweetened options like Carrington Farms Coconut Protein (\$20; carringtonfarms.com) or Bob's Red Mill Protein and Fiber Nutritional Booster (\$23; bobsredmill.com) let you focus on the fruit.



The Fancy

Turn your berry-based breakfast into a work of satisfying art by topping it with homemade granola (find a delightfully crunchy and nutty recipe at oprah.com/diygranola), adding edible flowers like violas (check your farmers' market or order online—we like gourmetsweetbotanicals.com), and serving it in a coconut shell. It'll be almost too pretty to eat.

GOJI BERRY AND HEMP ACAI BOWLS MAKES 4 SERVINGS TOTAL TIME: 15 MINUTES

To a blender, add 1 package unsweetened **acai puree** (check the frozen fruit aisle); 2 cups frozen mixed **berries**; 2 frozen **bananas**, peeled and diced; 2 scoops (about 6 Tbsp.) **protein powder**; and 2 cups **unsweetened almond milk**. Blend until thick and smooth, about 2 minutes. Meanwhile, split open 2 **coconuts** (hold each coconut with a towel and firmly tap along the center with a hammer or a meat mallet until the shell cracks in half); divide berry mixture evenly between 4 halves. Top each with 2 Tbsp. **shredded coconut**; ¼ banana, sliced; 1 Tbsp. **goji berries**; 1 Tbsp. **hemp seeds**; 2 Tbsp. **granola**; a sprinkle of **cacao nibs**; and a couple of **edible flowers**.



The Fast

Hectic weekdays are no time for whacking coconuts, so serve your blend in a regular old bowl, top it with packaged granola

(Purely Elizabeth's not-too-sweet Coconut Cashew version tastes close to homemade, \$7; purelyelizabeth.com), and call it a morning.

O-PROVED

Vitamix's Ascent Series blenders (from \$470; vitamix.com) deliver lump-free results. And if you want an icy berry treat with next to zero effort, we like Sambazon's frozen Superfood Acai Bites (\$7; sambazon.com). Think of them as tiny acai bowls dipped in dark chocolate—they're sweetened mostly with fruit, too, so they totally count as breakfast.



Food of DREAMS

Actress Patricia Heaton's chilled-noodle recipe, from her debut cookbook, *Food for Family and Friends*, serves as a reminder to savor life.

NOT TOO LONG AGO (or at least that's how it feels), I was a struggling actress in New York City. I held down a number of jobs to pay for acting classes, head shots, therapy, and rent for my sublet in the Meatpacking District, all while exploring a culinary world I'd never seen growing up in Cleveland. I learned to appreciate the stretchy center of an authentic French croissant when I worked room service at the Hotel Parker Meridien, delight in the savory glory of the spinach empanadas I sold at a tiny spot on 52nd Street, and seek solace in cold sesame noodles from a nearby Chinese restaurant during my graveyard shift as a proofreader at Morgan Stanley. Sweet and slippery with a tangy bite and a peanutty crunch, those 2 a.m. noodles helped get me through the dreaded hours before the dawn. Looking back, I realize that every experience, even (or especially!) if it's difficult, is an opportunity for personal and sometimes professional growth. My advice? Cherish all the adventures life brings your way—you never know where that late-night meal will lead.



Cold Sesame Noodles with Cucumber

MAKES 4 SERVINGS
TOTAL TIME: 35 MINUTES

In a pot of boiling water, cook 8 ounces Chinese **egg noodles** (or capellini or long rice noodles) until al dente, 3 to 5 minutes. Drain and transfer to a large bowl of ice water; soak until well chilled, about 5 minutes.

Drain again, return noodles to bowl, toss with 1 Tbsp. **peanut oil**, and set aside.

In another large bowl, whisk together ¼ cup **peanut butter**; ½ tsp. **sesame oil**; 3 Tbsp. **rice vinegar**; ¼ cup **soy sauce**; 2 tsp. toasted **sesame seeds**; 1 Tbsp. **honey**; 2 Tbsp. grated (or 1 Tbsp. ground) **ginger**; 2 **garlic** cloves, minced; 1 Tbsp. **crushed red pepper flakes**; and 1 Tbsp.

sriracha (or other red chili sauce). Fold in 1 Persian **cucumber**, grated; ½ **scallion**, chopped; and ½ cup salted roasted **peanuts**, chopped.

Add chilled pasta and toss to coat thoroughly, twirling the pasta into a nest shape. Top with 1 Persian cucumber, sliced; ¼ cup **cilantro** leaves, chopped; remaining ½ scallion; and another ½ cup salted roasted peanuts.

.com

For Heaton's General Tso's Shrimp and Falafel Patties recipes, visit oprah.com/patriciaheaton/recipes.

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PROMOTION

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continued from page 77

woke up that way. We had to become each other's support system.

OW: So much so that you created a book club! I'm very proud of my book club.

RH: I'm proud of mine!

OW: What gave you the idea?

RH: I felt society had let the men down. Most of the guys I was in with had dropped out of school in seventh or eighth grade. I knew books would open their minds. I convinced the warden to let me do it. For the first I chose *Go Tell It on the Mountain*.

OW: So you had the KKK reading James Baldwin.

RH: We also read *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and I thought, *Tom is me!*

OW: You put it this way in your book: "We were all slowly dying from our own fear—our minds killing us quicker than the State of Alabama ever could. Men would do all kinds of crazy things rather than spend another night with their own thoughts. *Bring in the books*, I thought. Let every man on the row have a week away, inside the world of a book. I knew if the mind could open, the heart would follow." Is that what happened to Henry?

RH: On the night of an execution, they ask you two things: What do you want for your last meal, and do you have anything you want to say? I was told Henry said, "All my life, everyone told me to

hate. The people I was taught to hate taught me to love. As I leave this world, I leave knowing what love feels like."

OW: Death row taught Henry to love. What did it teach you?

RH: It taught me that either you love or you hate—you help or you harm. The men on death row had been told the world would be better without them. I tried to say that this may not be

where we want to be, but let's do what we can for one another.

OW: Your mother didn't get to see you free.

RH: On September 22, 2002, my mama, Buhlar Hinton, died. When the guards told me, I gave up. She'd been deteriorating for a long time—I believe she died of a broken heart. I told Mr.

Stevenson to forget about my case. But I also heard Mama saying, "I didn't bring you up to be a quitter. I want you to fight." She was always my biggest cheerleader. When I would strike out at a baseball game, she was there to say I'd hit it the next time, to tell me how good I was. But now I heard her telling me she was disappointed in me.

OW: Because you were thinking about killing yourself.

RH: Yes. The next morning I apologized to Mr. Stevenson and said I wanted him to give Alabama all the hell he could.

OW: By that time, Bryan Stevenson had already been on your case for years—and they still wouldn't reopen it.

RH: Mr. Stevenson said the Alabama judges would never do the right thing and that he needed to take the case to the

U.S. Supreme Court. But he said, "Ray, if they rule against you, you'll be executed within two years." I was tired of sitting in that cage. I told him to file.

OW: Mr. Stevenson wanted the Supreme Court to review your case. They ended up vacating your conviction. Then local prosecutors dropped the charges. You were going to be free. What did that feel like?

RH: I cried like a baby. Then I asked when I'd get out. I got out 13 months later, on April 3, 2015—Good Friday. I hadn't been to a regular church in 30 years, but that Sunday I went to an Easter service.

OW: At one point there'd been a lawyer who offered you the opportunity to accept a sentence of life without parole, but you didn't take him up on it.

RH: Life without parole is for guilty people. When I was 12, my mother told me, "If you're man enough to bend down and pick up a rock, and if you're man enough to throw that rock, be man enough to admit you threw the rock." But this rock I hadn't thrown, so I couldn't say I had.

OW: On the day you were released, your best friend, Lester—who had visited you every single week for nearly 30 years—picked you up. You'd been behind bars since 1985. So you got in his car, and what was the first thing you wanted to do?

RH: Lester thought I'd want to get something decent to eat. But I wanted to go where they laid my mother's body. I see him messing with the radio dial, then we start driving down the road. I

heard this little white lady say, "In one-tenth of a mile, turn right." I jumped and said, "What the hell?!"

OW: You thought there was a white lady in the car?

RH: Yes, and Lester's laughing so hard he has to pull over. He says, "That's a GPS!" When he explained what it does, it really hit me how long I'd been locked up. The world had changed.

OW: You've never gotten an apology from the state of Alabama. Would it mean something if you did?

RH: Yes. The victims' families still think I'm the person who killed their loved ones. I want them to have proof of who did do it. If the state said they're sorry, it won't give me back what I lost, but it would mean a lot to hear them say, *We made a mistake; we won't do this again to someone else*.

OW: Do you spend a lot of time thinking about what you lost?

RH: Sometimes, especially when I think about the years I lost with my mother. I wish I could have been there to give her some cold water when she was sick, or make her some soup and feed it to her, like she would've done for me. I didn't get to say goodbye.

OW: Do you feel her presence with you?

RH: Sometimes I can hear her saying, "I'm proud of you."

Whenever I used to get an A or something, she was always there to bake me a nice peach cobbler or blackberry pie. I don't have anyone to do that for me.

OW: I feel like she's still guiding you, Ray. You're a good man.

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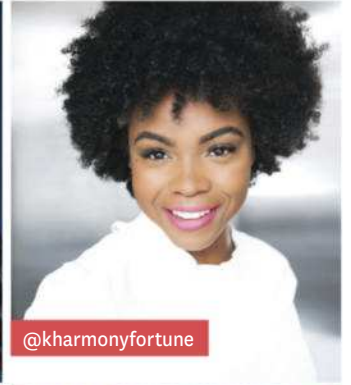
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What I Know for Sure

HAPPINESS IS...
(clockwise from left)
 a morning trek with Gayle and her favorite daughter, Kirby; playing with Layla and Luke (as he tries to pull me up by my shirt); tomato-soup goodness; my backyard in the mist.



OFTEN MY FAVORITE part of *The Oprah Winfrey Show* was the after-show. I relished the time just chatting with the audience. The question I asked them most frequently was, “What do you really want?” And many times the response was, “I just want to be happy.” But when I would follow up—“What would that look like for you?”—most people had trouble getting past something vague about their children or their income.

As Dr. Phil always says, “You gotta name it to claim it.” I’ve been claiming

happiness for a long time, dreaming big dreams and using the outcome of those dreams to bring beauty into my own life and to serve others.

Service, I gotta say, is my biggest reward and brings me enormous happiness: surprising other people with unexpected, needed, and sometimes just-for-fun support.

What else does happiness look like for me? It literally looks like my own backyard, glowing in setting sunlight or fogged with mist from the

Pacific. Every time I look at my yard, I get a thrill of delight.

- Same goes for...
- Delicious food from my garden. (Today for lunch I had a bowl of tomato soup made with freshly roasted tomatoes I picked this morning. Mmm-mm #happydelicious.)
 - Rolling in the grass with my dogs.
 - Sitting on the porch with friends, enjoying an evening cocktail.
 - Sharing a meal.
 - Talking books with people

who appreciate good stories.

- LOLing. IRL!
- Taking a morning hike.
- Luxuriating in a steamy bath with oils and candles.
- Watching my South African daughter-girls grow into confident women.
- Teaching what I’ve learned.
- Knowing I am loved.

Bottom line: I know for sure I’ve “made it” ’cause my happiness looks like my life.

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