



Discover. Read. Share.

LOVE THE GOWN? THEN TRY...

## RECOMMENDED NEXT READS

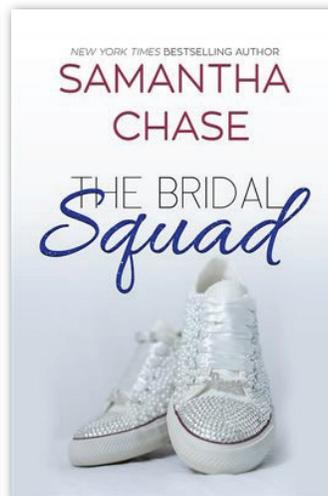
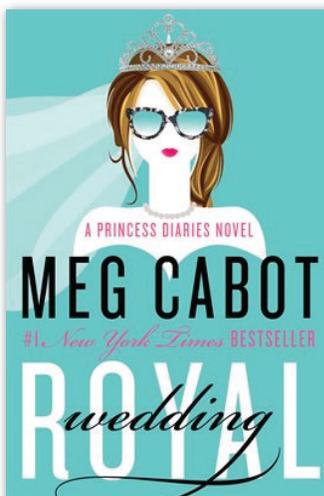
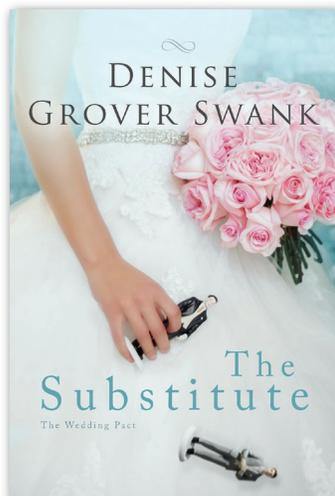
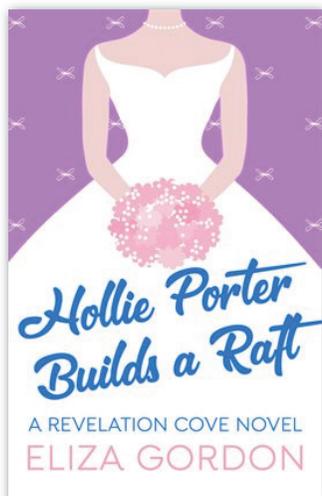
**“Millions will welcome this joyous event as a flash of color on the long road we have to travel!”  
—Sir Winston Churchill on the news of Princess Elizabeth’s forthcoming wedding**

The war may have been over by the time Ann and Miriam were hard at work on the gown, but tough times certainly were not. Rationing, poverty, and postwar trauma loomed, but the royal wedding was a bright, dazzling spot in a bleak period. Here, we explore themes both dark and light throughout *The Gown*—pick a nuance you’d like to further explore, and read across the row!

View the full collection here: <https://www.hoopladigital.com/collection/7624>

### WEDDING BELLS & LAUGHS ABOUT LOVE

Book clubs often sink into really serious reads so—just this once—why not spin *The Gown’s* wedding theme into something a bit lighter? Here are a few romantic comedies about the “big day” that are sure to give you and your crew some belly laughs!



#### **HOLLIE PORTER BUILDS A RAFT** BY ELIZA GORDON

Part two of the author’s Revelation Cove series, this installment can be counted on for mishaps, romance, and rollicking good fun. When Hollie’s darling Ryan pops the question, it’s all cake tasting, flower choosing, and dress fittings until a long-lost family member shows up to hijack her shiny new life. As Ryan’s words echo in her head—“Our raft, our rules”—Hollie has to face facts: sometimes rafts aren’t secured by genetics, but by love...and occasional help from clever creatures!

#### **THE SUBSTITUTE** BY DENISE GROVER SWANK

Megan Vandemeer meant to tell her parents about her broken engagement, but a month and a half later she finds herself boarding a plane home to her wedding. Having stretched avoidance to its limits, it’s time to come clean—until, a couple of drinks on the airline later, Megan finds herself spilling to the tall, dark, and handsome stranger next to her. With trouble brewing of his own, Josh agrees to a wild plan...he’s only a substitute groom, but the more time he and Megan spend together, the more their pretend engagement starts to feel real.

#### **ROYAL WEDDING** BY MEG CABOT

From the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Meg Cabot comes the very first adult installment of her popular Princess Diaries series. Following the planning of Princess Mia and her Prince Charming’s fairy-tale wedding, one worries a few poisoned apples could turn this happily-ever-after into a royal nightmare. Can Mia prove to everyone—especially herself—that she’s not only ready to wed, but ready to rule as well?

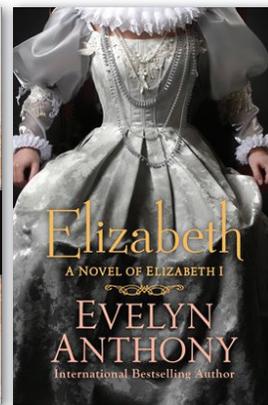
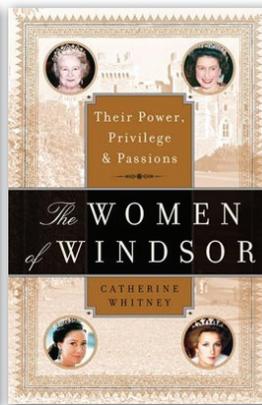
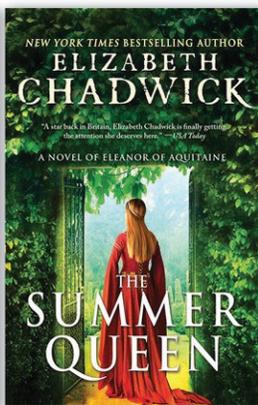
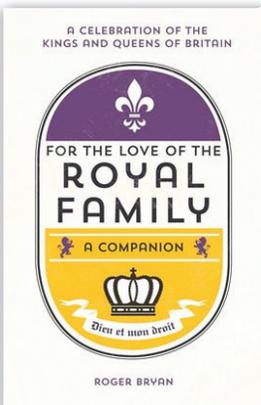
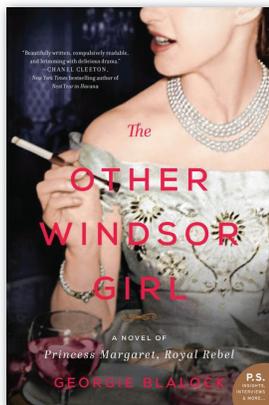
#### **THE BRIDAL SQUAD** BY SAMANTHA CHASE

Samantha Chase’s Friday Night Brides are back, and this time, it’s their first season running the Enchanted Bridal business! It was one thing to model in a weekly fashion show, but it’s quite another to be the ones calling the shots. With the lofty expectation of making future brides’ dreams come true, their first client has them wondering if they are really prepared for this new career direction.

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## ROYAL READS

Have royal family fever? Never has a single bloodline been so beloved and scrutinized across the globe! Satisfy your curiosity and learn a new thing or two about the intriguing individuals of the monarchy through nonfiction books and historical-based fiction.



### **THE OTHER WINDSOR GIRL** BY GEORGIE BLALOCK

In a historical debut evoking the style of *The Crown*, the daughter of an impoverished noble is swept into the fame and notoriety of the royal family and Princess Margaret's fast-living friends when she is appointed as Margaret's second lady-in-waiting.

### **FOR THE LOVE OF THE ROYAL FAMILY** BY ROGER BRYAN

This rich "Did-You-Know?" miscellany celebrates the fascinating history of the British royal family, from the reign of Egbert, King of Wessex, to the monarchy of the present day. Full of titillating trivia, little-known facts, bite-size biographies, and memorable quotations, it paints a colorful picture of how the kings and queens of this noble land have shaped the way we live today.

### **THE SUMMER QUEEN** BY ELIZABETH CHADWICK

Eleanor of Aquitaine, 12th century queen of France and later of England, is one of the most powerful and irrepresible women in medieval history, and her story of romance, scandal, and political intrigue has fascinated readers for centuries. The first in a trilogy, *The Summer Queen* follows Eleanor through the Second Crusade to the end of her marriage to Louis VII. The author's meticulous research (including delving into the Akashic records) portrays the Middle Ages and Eleanor with an unparalleled depth and vivid imagery.

### **THE WOMEN OF WINDSOR** BY CATHERINE WHITNEY

Who are the women of Windsor? We know them as Elizabeth, the Queen; Elizabeth, the Queen Mother; Princess Margaret; and Anne, the Princess Royal. Their images have been with us on film and in print for more than a century, priceless artifacts that call to mind a grander era. From a distance, they appear unknowable. But each is an individual, with an extraordinary story to tell of how they have shaped the world, each in her own way.

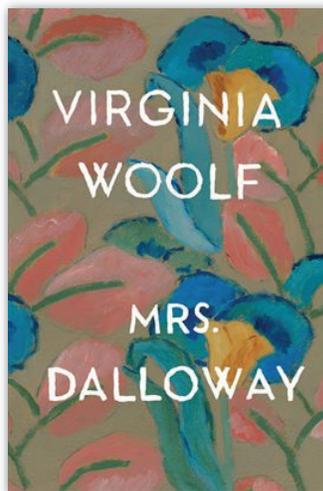
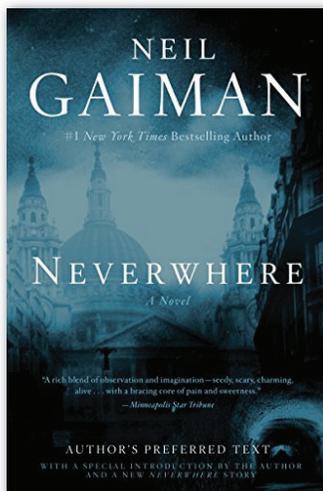
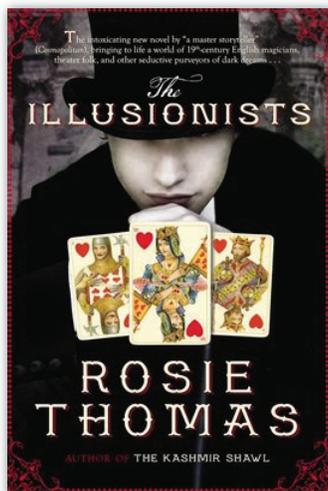
### **ELIZABETH** BY EVELYN ANTHONY

Originally penned in 1960, enjoy this historical fiction journey through the first three decades of the reign of Elizabeth I. International bestselling author Evelyn Anthony illuminates the woman who, in spite of herself, still yearned for human connection. The book also explores the monarch's long battle with her cousin Mary, Queen of Scots, for the throne, and advances a fascinating theory about who murdered Lord Robert's first wife.

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## LIVING & LOVING IN LONDON

So many stories have been set in the capital and largest city of England. Its history stretches back to Roman times, its architecture is some of the most recognizable in the world, and its royal family—as explored in the collection prior—is one of unparalleled influence and celebrity. Here are a few of our favorite fictional tales set in this real-life metropolis.



### THE ILLUSIONISTS BY ROSIE THOMAS

Set in London in 1870, *The Illusionists* is a captivating tale of passion and fantasy set in the theater world. Eliza, a young, beautiful woman of limited means, is modern before her time. She longs for more than domestic drudgery, and through her work as an artist's model, she meets the magnetic Devil—a born showman whose dream is to run his own theater company. Thrown together by a twist of fate, the Devil, Eliza, and a small cast of clashing characters' lives are inextricably linked: the fortune of one depends on the fortune of the other. As Eliza gets sucked into the dangerous world her strange companions inhabit, she risks not only her heart, but also her life.

### NEVERWHERE BY NEIL GAIMAN

In master storyteller Neil Gaiman's first solo novel, Richard Mayhew, a young man with a good heart and an ordinary life, is forever changed when he stops to help a girl he finds bleeding on a London sidewalk. His small act of kindness propels him into a world he never dreamed existed. There are people who fall through the cracks, and Richard has become one of them. And he must learn to survive in this city of shadows and darkness, monsters and saints, murderers and angels, if he is ever to return to the London that he knew.

### MRS. DALLOWAY BY VIRGINIA WOOLF

Heralded as Virginia Woolf's greatest novel, this is a vivid portrait of a single day in a woman's life. When we meet her, Mrs. Clarissa Dalloway is preoccupied with the last-minute details of party preparation while in her mind she is something much more than a perfect society hostess. As she readies her Westminster home, she is flooded with remembrances of faraway times. And, met with the realities of the present, Clarissa reexamines the choices that brought her there, hesitantly looking ahead to the unfamiliar work of growing old.

### GOODNIGHT FROM LONDON BY JENNIFER ROBSON

From the author of our Spotlight Selection, *The Gown*, Jennifer Robson, comes a lush historical novel inspired in part by wartime experiences of Robson's own grandmother. *Goodnight from London* tells the fascinating story of Ruby Sutton, an ambitious American journalist who moves to London in 1940 to report on World War II and start a new life an ocean away from her past. But as the war progresses and the Blitz stretches unbroken across horrific months, she must set aside her determination to remain an objective observer. When she loses everything, and depends upon the kindness of strangers, Ruby learns for the first time the depth of true friendship—and what it is to love a man burdened by secrets that aren't his to share.

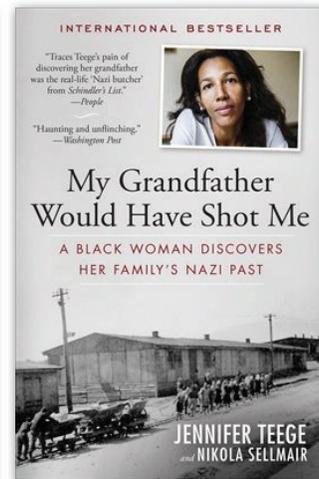
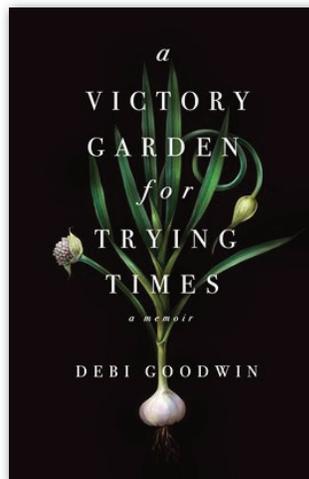
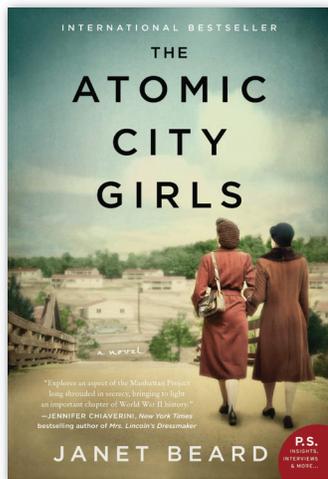
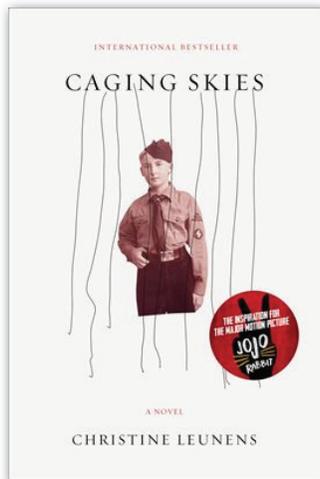
When we asked author Jennifer Robson which of her books she'd suggest reading next if you loved *The Gown*, she encouraged, "Go back to *Goodnight from London*...[and] recognize some of its characters, most notably Walter."

**Check out the full hoopla-exclusive author Q&A on [theclub.hoopladigital.com](http://theclub.hoopladigital.com)!**

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## UNIQUE TAKES ON WWII LITERATURE AND MEMOIR

The fascination with the WWII period is palpable even today, as it touched so many lives, and survivors are still in our midst. These reads—both fiction and non—are fresh takes on the topic, offering contemporary views, intimate opinions, or lesser-known histories.



### **CAGING SKIES** BY CHRISTINE LEUNENS

An avid member of the Hitler Youth in 1940s Vienna, Johannes Betzler discovers his parents are hiding a Jewish girl named Elsa behind a false wall in their home. His initial horror turns to interest—then love and obsession. After his parents disappear, Johannes is the only one aware of Elsa's existence in the house and he alone is responsible for her fate. Drawing strength from his daydreams about Hitler, Johannes plans for the end of the war and what it might mean for him and Elsa. The inspiration for the major film *Jojo Rabbit* by Taika Waititi, *Caging Skies*, sold in over twenty countries, is a work of rare power, a stylistic and storytelling triumph.

### **THE ATOMIC CITY GIRLS** BY JANET BEARD

A riveting WWII novel of the everyday people who worked on the Manhattan Project where the motto was, "What you see here, what you hear here, what you do here, let it stay here." In late 1944, 18-year-old June boards a bus headed for Oak Ridge, TN – a city that sprung up in mere months, but doesn't officially exist. There, June joins hundreds of other women operating massive machines whose purpose is never explained. They know they are helping win the war, but cannot ask questions or chat up outsiders. The girls spend their evenings socializing with soldiers, scientists, and workmen. June longs to know more and begins an affair with Sam Cantor, the young Jewish physicist who oversees the lab and understands the end goal only too well, while her roommate Cici is on her own mission: to find a wealthy husband and escape her sharecropper roots. Across town, African-American construction worker Joe Brewer knows nothing of the government's plans, but his new job pays enough to make it worth leaving his family behind, at least for now. But a breach in security will intertwine his fate with June's search for answers. When the Hiroshima bombing brings the truth about Oak Ridge into devastating focus, June must confront her ideals about loyalty, patriotism, and war itself.

### **A VICTORY GARDEN FOR TRYING TIMES** BY DEBI GOODWIN

Ever since her childhood on a Niagara farm, Debi has dug in the dirt to find resilience. But when her husband, Peter, was diagnosed with cancer in November, it was too late in the season to seek solace in her garden. With idle hands and a fearful mind, Debi sought something to sustain her through the months ahead. She soon came across Victory Gardens—the vegetable gardens cultivated during the world wars that sustained so many. During an anxious winter, Debi researched, drew plans, and ordered seeds. In spring, with Peter in remission, her garden thrived, and life got back on track. But when Peter's cancer returned like a killing frost, the garden became a reminder that everything must come to an end. *A Victory Garden for Trying Times* is a personal journey of love, loss, and healing through the natural cycles of the earth.

### **MY GRANDFATHER WOULD HAVE SHOT ME** BY JENNIFER TEEGE AND NIKOLA SELLMAIR

At age 38, Jennifer Teege happened to pluck a library book from the shelf—and discovered a horrifying fact: Her grandfather was Amon Goeth, the vicious Nazi commandant immortalized in the film *Schindler's List* and executed in 1946. The more Teege learned, the more certain she became: If her grandfather had met her—a black woman—he would have killed her. Teege's discovery both depresses her and fills her with questions: Why did her birth mother withhold this secret? Could her grandmother have loved a mass murderer? Can evil be inherited? Cowritten by Nikola Sellmair, who adds further historical context and insight from Teege's family and friends in an interwoven narrative.