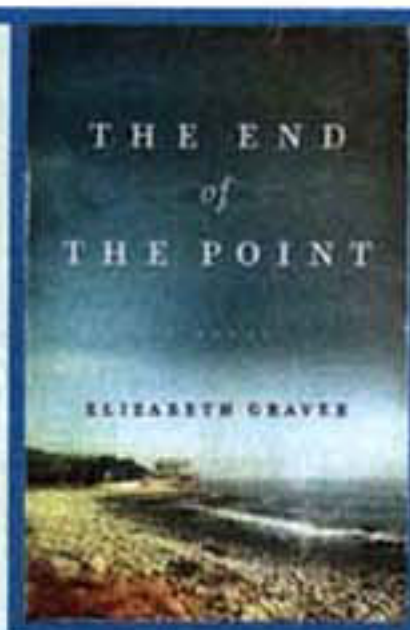


★ **The End of the Point.**

By Elizabeth Graver.

Mar. 2013. 352p. Harper, \$24.99 (9780062184849).

For generations, the wealthy Porter family has sought refuge in its vacation home at Ashaunt Point along Massachusetts' rocky coastline. It's a place where Helen and her siblings can run wild and free under the watchful eye of Bea and her fellow coterie of Scottish caregivers. All is well until WWII erupts and an army outpost is installed nearby. Soldiers lure Helen to dances, seduce Bea into a hasty romance, and rob Helen's sister Jane of her innocence. Then word comes that her brother has been killed in action, and the world can no longer be held at bay. When Helen returns decades later as a young wife and mother, she tries to re-create Ashaunt's former simplicity for her emotionally fragile son, but the Vietnam War and the counterculture take their toll. At the end of her life, as cancer ravages her body, Helen finds Ashaunt equally threatened by environmental disasters and encroaching development, and the outrage becomes too much to bear. With a style and voice reminiscent of William Trevor and Graham Swift, Graver's powerfully evocative portrait of a family strained by events both large and small celebrates the indelible influence certain places can exert over the people who love them. —Carol Haggas



reveal a dangerous secret, and downtrodden Wyatt, a fiftysomething blue-collar worker who begins to confront a lifelong emotional void after meeting and falling in love with a local nurse. Meanwhile, there's Tony, the failed athlete who has returned to his hometown as the detective assigned to Ronnie's case. As the search for Ronnie intensifies, Susanna begins to question the stagnancy in her own life, while other characters confront their perceptions of self-worth. Jones' well-crafted tale captures small-town nuances while exploring the individual psychologies of her characters and their struggles. —Leah Strauss

Our Frail Blood.

By Peter Nathaniel Malae.

Mar. 2013. 448p. Black Cat, paper, \$15.95 (9780802120786).

Malae tackles the tribulations of an American family in crisis in his newest novel. An Italian American clan of five siblings, the Felices are plunged into a feud when their aging mother, Mary, must be placed in hospice care. Out of the family ether emerges Murrone, the illegitimate child of black-sheep brother Lazarus. She hopes to bring the family back together and find her place within it through the process. Like Jonathan Franzen's *The Corrections* (2001), Malae's story wrestles with the individual problems of each family member and places them in stark relief to one another. From international adoption to the AIDS crisis, no family member is immune to the emotional pain that living in a complex world brings. For readers who enjoy richly textured family sagas, this is a must-read. —Heather Paulson

Project Chick II: What's Done in the Dark.

By Nikki Turner.

Mar. 2013. 256p. St. Martin's/Griffin, paper, \$14.99 (9781250001436).

When readers met Tressa in *A Project Chick* (2003), she was living a lavish lifestyle

Continued from p.22

child for a class-action suit on behalf of the descendants of American slaves—she has little appreciation for how radically the task will change the course of her own life and destiny. As she searches for a descendant of Josephine Bell, a “house girl” rumored to have been the actual artist of a series of stunning paintings credited to her white mistress, she peels away layers of both Josephine's past and her own complacency. Retracing Josephine's often-elusive path, she uncovers some troubling facts about her parents and the startling lie that formed the basis of her childhood and young adulthood. Stretching back and forth across time and geography, this riveting tale is bolstered by some powerful universal truths. —Margaret Flanagan

Indiscretion.

By Charles Dubow.

Feb. 2013. 400p. Morrow, \$24.99 (9780062201058).

Harry and Madeleine Winslow seem to have it all. Harry has recently won the National Book Award, and Madeleine, who comes from money, does everything, from playing tennis to cooking dinner, with sophisticated ease. Then, during one of their weekends at their Hamptons house, they meet beautiful 26-year-old Claire, an unabashed admirer of their lifestyle, who soon comes to be a fixture at their summer parties. When the Winslows decamp to Rome, where Harry struggles to complete his new novel, Claire is bereft. Then Harry returns to the States for a meeting with his publisher, and his chance encounter with Claire leads them to embark upon a passionate affair. All of the drama unleashed by their betrayal of Maddy is conveyed by Walter, a childhood friend of Maddy's who has long been in love with her. In his first novel, Dubow proves himself to be an elegant writer with a shrewd sense of how to shape his material for the broadest appeal.

Glamorous settings, old money, and steamy sex all combine to make this one a totally addictive read. —Joanne Wilkinson

The Next Time You See Me.

By Holly Goddard Jones.

Feb. 2013. 384p. Touchstone, \$24.99 (9781451683363).

Jones' debut novel, following her short story collection *Girl Trouble* (2009), follows the intersecting effects of one woman's disappearance on residents of a small Kentucky town. Middle-school teacher Susanna becomes concerned when she finds her older sister, Ronnie, is missing. The two share a complicated relationship—Ronnie is a hard-partying factory worker, while Susanna is a mild-mannered wife and mother. When Susanna launches a widespread search, it unexpectedly connects the lives of other townsfolk. Such as Emily, a tragic 13-year-old outcast whose daydreams may well

★ **Jacob's Folly.**

By Rebecca Miller.

Mar. 2013. 352p. Farrar, \$26 (9780374178543).

Miller embeds readers in the outsized consciousness of a fly, the modern reincarnation of Jacob, a Jewish peddler taken from eighteenth-century Paris and stripped of his identity. Via an enigmatic capacity to enter minds, the fly encourages young, Orthodox Masha's forbidden stage aspirations while simultaneously inciting a botched bid to “rescue” her. Because of consistent narration, Miller's intricate plots are never confusing. Rather, they are foils across time and space, offering measurements of survival, belonging, inheritance, the cost of transformation—whether coerced or voluntary—and outcome's overpowering of intention. Jacob acts undetected by his targets, but a far more inscrutable figure reveals his role in the satisfying conclusion. The novel breathes sensuality, creating sounds of languages mixing in dusty streets, the feeling of being bareheaded, without yarmulke, for the first time, and even an orange's distinctive smell. Readers will chuckle contentedly and without malice at a violent, life-affirming death. A deeply pleasurable, darkly comic, and original reinterpretation of Jewish history's “indestructible storyline,” alighting thoughtfully on forces both individual and collective, internal and external, from genocide to assimilation. —Cynthia-Marie O'Brien

