



Page Turners @ Monroe Township Library Books about Mothers (May 2024)

For One More Day - [Albom, Mitch](#)

FIC ALBOM

In an inspirational debut novel by the author of Tuesdays with Morrie, Charles "Chick" Benetto, grieving over the death of his mother, uses alcohol as a crutch to deal with his loneliness, isolation, and depression and the disintegration of his life, until an encounter with his mother's ghost brings him new awareness and leads him to attempt to put his life back together.

The Push - [Audrain, Ashley](#)

FIC AUDRAIN

A tense, page-turning psychological drama about the making and breaking of a family, about a woman whose experience of motherhood is nothing at all what she hoped for--and everything she feared. Blythe Connor is determined that she will be the warm, comforting, supportive mother to her new baby Violet that she herself never had. But in the thick of motherhood's exhausting early days, Blythe becomes convinced that something is wrong with her daughter--Violet rejects her mother, screams uncontrollably, and becomes a disturbing, disruptive presence at her preschool. Or is it all in Blythe's head? Her husband, Fox, says she's imagining things. What he sees is an overwhelmed wife who can't cope with the day-to-day grind. The more Fox dismisses her fears, the more Blythe begins to question her own sanity, and the more we begin to question what Blythe is telling us about her life as well. Then their son Sam is born--and with him, Blythe has the natural, blissful connection she'd always imagined with her child. Even Violet seems to love her little brother. But when life as they know it is changed in an instant, the devastating fall-out forces Blythe to face the truth. Here, we see the making and breaking of a family in crystalline detail, and what it feels like when women are not believed. The Push is a tour de force you will read in a sitting, an utterly immersive page-turner that will challenge everything you think you know about motherhood, about our children, and about what happens behind the doors of even the most perfect-looking families.

The Mothers – [Bennett, Brit](#)

FIC BENNETT

It is the last season of high school life for Nadia Turner, a rebellious, grief-stricken, seventeen-year-old beauty. Mourning her own mother's recent suicide, she takes up with the local pastor's son. Luke Sheppard is twenty-one, a former football star whose injury has reduced him to waiting tables at a diner. They are young; it's not serious. But the pregnancy that results from this teen romance--and the subsequent cover-up--will have an impact that goes far beyond their youth. As Nadia hides her secret from everyone, including Aubrey, her God-fearing best friend, the years move quickly. Soon, Nadia, Luke, and Aubrey are full-fledged adults and still living in debt to the choices they made that one seaside summer, caught in a love triangle they must carefully maneuver, and dogged by the constant, nagging question: What if they had chosen differently? The possibilities of the road not taken are a relentless haunt.

The School for Good Mothers – [Chan, Jessamine](#)

FIC CHAN

Set in near-future America, *The School for Good Mothers* introduces readers to a government-run reform program where bad mothers are retrained using robot doll children with artificial intelligence. Protagonist Frida Liu, a 39-year-old Chinese-American single mother in Philadelphia, loses custody of her 18-month-old daughter, Harriet, after she leaves Harriet home alone for two hours on one very bad day. To regain custody, Frida must spend a year at a newly-created institution, where she practices parenting with bad mothers from all over the county. There, she learns to love an uncannily life-like toddler girl doll in order to demonstrate her maternal instincts and prove to her family court judge that she deserves a second chance. Frida is an outsider in every way: better educated, more affluent, and the only Asian. The mothers, whose transgressions range from benign to horrific, are under constant surveillance. If they don't pass all the school's tests, their parental rights will be terminated. Inspired by dystopian classics such as *1984*, *Never Let Me Go*, and *The Handmaid's Tale*, the novel eviscerates the dominant American parenting culture, while highlighting the tragedy of state-sponsored family separation. Is there one right way to mother? Can a bad mother ever be redeemed? With warmth, heart, and dark humor, the novel tells a timeless story of a mother fighting to win back her child, and her struggle to hold onto her integrity while being indoctrinated.

How to be an American Housewife – [Dilloway, Margare](#)

FIC DILLOWAY

How to Be an American Housewife is a novel about mothers and daughters, and the pull of tradition. It tells the story of Shoko, a Japanese woman who married an American GI, and her grown daughter, Sue, a divorced mother whose life as an American housewife hasn't been what she'd expected. When illness prevents Shoko from traveling to Japan, she asks Sue to go in her place. The trip reveals family secrets that change their lives in dramatic and unforeseen ways. Offering an entertaining glimpse into American and Japanese family lives and their potent aspirations, this is a warm and engaging novel full of unexpected insight.

Room – [Donoghue, Emma](#)

FIC DONOGHUE

Narrator Jack and his mother, who was kidnapped seven years earlier when she was a 19-year-old college student, celebrate his fifth birthday. They live in a tiny, 11-foot-square soundproofed cell in a converted shed in the kidnapper's yard. The sociopath, whom Jack has dubbed Old Nick, visits at night, grudgingly doling out food and supplies. But Ma, as Jack calls her, proves to be resilient and resourceful--and attempts a nail-biting escape.

The Other Mothers – Faulkner, Katherine

FIC FAULKNER

When a young nanny is found dead in mysterious circumstances, new mom, Tash, is intrigued. She has been searching for a story to launch her career as a freelance journalist. But she has also been searching for something else—new friends to help her navigate motherhood.

She sees them at her son's new playgroup. The other mothers. A group of sleek, sophisticated women who live in a neighborhood of tree-lined avenues and stunning houses. The sort of mothers Tash herself would like to be. When the mothers welcome her into their circle, Tash discovers the kind of life she has always dreamt of—their elegant London townhouses a far cry from her cramped basement flat and endless bills. She is quickly swept up into their wealthy world via coffees, cocktails, and playdates. But when another young woman is found dead, it's clear there's much more to the community than meets the eye. The more Tash investigates, the more she's led uncomfortably close to the other mothers. Are these women really her friends? Or is there another, more dangerous reason why she has been so quickly accepted into their exclusive world? Who, exactly, is investigating who?

Sharp Objects – Flynn, Gillian

FIC FLYNN

Fresh from a brief stay at a psych hospital, reporter Camille Preaker faces a troubling assignment: she must return to her tiny hometown to cover the murders of two preteen girls. For years, Camille has hardly spoken to her neurotic, hypochondriac mother or to the half-sister she barely knows: a beautiful thirteen-year-old with an eerie grip on the town. Now, installed in her old bedroom in her family's Victorian mansion, Camille finds herself identifying with the young victims—a bit too strongly. Dogged by her own demons, she must unravel the psychological puzzle of her own past if she wants to get the story—and survive this homecoming.

Motherthing - Hogarth, Ainslie

FIC HOGARTH

A darkly funny domestic horror novel about a woman who must take drastic measures to save her husband and herself from the vengeful ghost of her mother-in-law. Abby Lamb has done it. She's found the Great Good in her husband, Ralph, and together they will start a family and put all the darkness in her childhood to rest. But then the Lambs move in with Ralph's mother, Laura, whose depression has made it impossible for her to live on her own. She's venomous and cruel, especially to Abby, who has a complicated understanding of motherhood given the way her own, now-estranged, mother raised her. When Laura takes her own life, her ghost starts to haunt Abby and Ralph in very different ways. Ralph is plunged into depression, and Abby is being terrorized by a force intent on taking everything she loves away from her. With everything on the line, Abby must make the ultimate sacrifice in order to prove her adoration to Ralph and break Laura's hold on the family for good.

Prom Mom – Lippman, Laura

FIC LIPPMAN

New York Times bestseller Laura Lippman tells the story of Amber Glass, desperately trying to get away from her tabloid past but compulsively drawn back to the city of her youth and the prom date who destroyed everything she was reaching for.

Amber Glass has spent her entire adult life putting as much distance as possible between her and her hometown of Baltimore, where she fears she will forever be known as "Prom Mom"—the girl who allegedly killed her baby on the night of the prom after her date, Joe Simpson, abandoned her to pursue the girl he really liked. But when circumstances bring Amber back to the city, she realizes she can have a second chance—as long as she stays away from Joe, now a successful commercial real estate developer, married to a plastic surgeon, Meredith, to whom he is devoted.

The problem is, Amber can't stay away from Joe. And Joe finds that it's increasingly hard for him to ignore Amber, if only because she remembers the boy he was and the man he said he was going to be. Against the surreal backdrop of 2020 and early 2021, the two are slowly drawn to each other and eventually cross the line they've been trying not to cross.

And then Joe asks Amber to help him do the unthinkable . . . and she must decide if she is willing to let their toxic and dangerous past repeat itself.

Little Fires Everywhere – Ng, Celeste

FIC NG

From the bestselling author of *Everything I Never Told You* and *Our Missing Hearts* comes a riveting novel that traces the intertwined fates of the picture-perfect Richardson family and the enigmatic mother and daughter who upend their lives.

In Shaker Heights, a placid, progressive suburb of Cleveland, everything is planned--from the layout of the winding roads, to the colors of the houses, to the successful lives its residents will go on to lead. And no one embodies this spirit more than Elena Richardson, whose guiding principle is playing by the rules. Enter Mia Warren--an enigmatic artist and single mother--who arrives in this idyllic bubble with her teenaged daughter Pearl, and rents a house from the Richardsons. Soon Mia and Pearl become more than tenants: all four Richardson children are drawn to the mother-daughter pair. But Mia carries with her a mysterious past and a disregard for the status quo that threatens to upend this carefully ordered community.

When old family friends of the Richardsons attempt to adopt a Chinese-American baby, a custody battle erupts that dramatically divides the town--and puts Mia and Elena on opposing sides. Suspicious of Mia and her motives, Elena is determined to uncover the secrets in Mia's past. But her obsession will come at unexpected and devastating costs.

Little Fires Everywhere explores the weight of secrets, the nature of art and identity, and the ferocious pull of motherhood--and the danger of believing that following the rules can avert disaster.

Take My Hand – Perkins-Valdez, Dolen

FIC PERKINS-VALDEZ

Inspired by true events that rocked the nation, a profoundly moving novel about a Black nurse in post-segregation Alabama who blows the whistle on a terrible wrong done to her patients, from the New York Times bestselling author of *Wench*. Montgomery, Alabama, 1973. Fresh out of nursing school, Civil Townsend has big plans to make a difference, especially in her African American community. At the Montgomery Family Planning Clinic, she intends to help women make their own choices for their lives and bodies. But when her first week on the job takes her down a dusty country road to a worn-down one-room cabin, she's shocked to learn that her new patients, India and Erica, are children--just eleven and thirteen years old. Neither of the Williams sisters has even kissed a boy, but they are poor and Black, and for those handling the family's welfare benefits, that's reason enough to have the girls on birth control. As Civil grapples with her role, she takes India, Erica, and their family into her heart. Until one day she arrives at the door to learn the unthinkable has happened, and nothing will ever be the same for any of them. Decades later, with her daughter grown and a long career in her wake, Dr. Civil Townsend is ready to retire, to find her peace, and to leave the past behind. But there are people and stories that refuse to be forgotten. That must not be forgotten. Because history repeats what we don't remember.

Leaving Time – Picoult, Jodi

FIC PICOULT

Alice Metcalf was a devoted mother, loving wife, and accomplished scientist who studied grief among elephants. Yet it's been a decade since she disappeared under mysterious circumstances, leaving behind her small daughter, husband, and the animals to which she devoted her life. All signs point to abandonment . . . or worse. Still Jenna--now thirteen years old and truly orphaned by a father maddened by grief--steadfastly refuses to believe in her mother's desertion. So she decides to approach the two people who might still be able to help her find Alice: a disgraced psychic named Serenity Jones, and Virgil Stanhope, the cynical detective who first investigated her mother's disappearance and the death of one of her mother's co-workers. Together these three lonely souls will discover truths destined to forever change their lives.

The Mother Act – Reimer, Heidi

FIC REIMER

A clever and propulsive debut novel tracing the complicated relationship between a larger-than-life actress who refuses to abandon her career for motherhood, and the daughter she chooses to abandon instead, as they confront one another once and for all.

One Italian Summer – Serle, Rebecca

FIC SERLE

When Katy's mother dies, she is left reeling. Carol wasn't just Katy's mom, but her best friend and first phone call. She had all the answers and now, when Katy needs her the most, she is gone. To make matters worse, their planned mother-daughter trip of a lifetime looms: two weeks in Positano, the magical town Carol spent the summer right before she met Katy's father. Katy has been waiting years for Carol to take her, and now she is faced with embarking on the adventure alone. But as soon as she steps foot on the Amalfi Coast, Katy begins to feel her mother's spirit. Buoyed by the stunning waters, beautiful cliff sides, delightful residents, and, of course, delectable food, Katy feels herself coming back to life. And then Carol appears--in the flesh, healthy, sun-tanned, and thirty years old. Katy doesn't understand what is happening, or how all she can focus on is that she has somehow, impossibly, gotten her mother back. Over the course of one Italian summer, Katy gets to know Carol, not as her mother, but as the young woman before her. She is not exactly who Katy imagined she might be, however, and soon Katy must reconcile the mother who knew everything with the young woman who does not yet have a clue. Rebecca Serle's next great love story is here, and this time it's between a mother and a daughter. With her signature "heartbreaking, redemptive, and authentic" (Jamie Ford, New York Times bestselling author) prose, Serle has crafted a transcendent novel about how we move on after loss, and how the people we love never truly leave us.

The Daughter – Shemilt, Jane

FIC SHEMILT

Jenny is a successful family doctor, the mother of three great teenagers, married to a celebrated neurosurgeon. But when her youngest child, fifteen-year-old Naomi, doesn't come home after her school play, Jenny's seemingly ideal life begins to crumble. The authorities launch a nationwide search with no success. Naomi has vanished and her family is broken. As the months pass, the worst-case scenarios-- kidnapping, murder--seem less plausible. The trail has gone cold. Yet, for a desperate Jenny, the search has barely begun.

Please Look After Mom - Shin, Kyöng-suk

FIC SHIN

A million-plus-copy best seller in Korea—a magnificent English-language debut poised to become an international sensation—this is the stunning, deeply moving story of a family's search for their mother, who goes missing one afternoon amid the crowds of the Seoul Station subway.

Told through the piercing voices and urgent perspectives of a daughter, son, husband, and mother, Please Look after Mom is at once an authentic picture of contemporary life in Korea and a universal story of family love.

You will never think of your mother the same way again after you read this book.

Mother Daughter Murder Night – Simon, Nina

MYS SIMON

Nothing brings an estranged family together like a murder next door. High-powered businesswoman Lana Rubicon has a lot to be proud of: her keen intelligence, impeccable taste, and the L.A. real estate empire she's built. But when she finds herself trapped 300 miles north of the city, convalescing in a sleepy coastal town with her adult daughter Beth and teenage granddaughter Jack, Lana is stuck counting otters instead of square footage - and hoping that boredom won't kill her before the cancer does. Then Jack -

tiny in stature but fiercely independent - stumbles upon a dead body while kayaking near their bungalow. Jack quickly becomes a suspect in the homicide investigation, and the Rubicon women are thrown into chaos. Beth thinks Lana should focus on recovery, but Lana has a better idea. She'll pull on her wig, find the true murderer, protect her family, and prove she still has power. With Jack and Beth's help, Lana uncovers a web of lies, family vendettas, and land disputes lurking beneath the surface of a community populated by folksy conservationists and wealthy ranchers. But as their amateur snooping advances into ever-more dangerous territory, the headstrong Rubicon women must learn do the one thing they've always resisted: depend on each other.

Nora Webster – Toibin, Colm

FIC TOIBIN

From one of contemporary literature's bestselling, critically acclaimed and beloved authors, a magnificent new novel set in Ireland, about a fiercely compelling young widow and mother of four, navigating grief and fear, struggling for hope. Set in Wexford, Ireland, Colm Toibin's superb seventh novel introduces the formidable, memorable and deeply moving Nora Webster. Widowed at forty, with four children and not enough money, Nora has lost the love of her life, Maurice, the man who rescued her from the stifling world to which she was born. And now she fears she may be drawn back into it. Wounded, strong-willed, clinging to secrecy in a tiny community where everyone knows your business, Nora is drowning in her own sorrow and blind to the suffering of her young sons, who have lost their father. Yet she has moments of stunning empathy and kindness, and when she begins to sing again, after decades, she finds solace, engagement, a haven--herself. Nora Webster is a masterpiece in character study by a writer at the zenith of his career, "beautiful and daring" (The New York Times Book Review) and able to "sneak up on readers and capture their imaginations".

Aquarium – Vann, David

FIC VANN

Twelve-year-old Caitlin's daily visits to the local aquarium after school bring her into contact with an elderly fellow aquarium lover, whom she befriends just as she discovers a shocking family secret.

Black Cake – Wilkerson, Charmaine

FIC WILKERSON

In this moving debut novel, two estranged siblings must set aside their differences to deal with their mother's death and her hidden past--a journey of discovery that takes them from the Caribbean to London to California and ends with her famous black cake. In present-day California, Eleanor Bennett's death leaves behind a puzzling inheritance for her two children, Byron and Benny: a traditional Caribbean black cake, made from a family recipe with a long history, and a voice recording. In her message, Eleanor shares a tumultuous story about a headstrong young swimmer who escapes her island home under suspicion of murder. The heartbreaking journey Eleanor unfolds, the secrets she still holds back, and the mystery of a long-lost child, challenge everything the siblings thought they knew about their family, and themselves. Can Byron and Benny reclaim their once-close relationship, piece together Eleanor's true history, and fulfill her final request to 'share the black cake when the time is right?' Will their mother's revelations bring them back together or leave them feeling more lost than ever? Charmaine Wilkerson's debut novel is a story of how the inheritance of betrayals, secrets, memories, and even names, can shape relationships and history. Deeply evocative and beautifully written, Black Cake is an extraordinary journey through the life of a family changed forever by the choices of its matriarch.