Cloud Cuckoo Land by Anthony Doerr – Set in Constantinople in the fifteenth century, in a small town in present-day Idaho, and on an interstellar ship decades from now, Doerr writes of our interconnectedness—with other species, with each other, with those who lived before us, and with those who will be here after we’re gone.

To the Lighthouse by Virginia Woolf – From the seemingly trivial postponement of a visit to a nearby lighthouse, Woolf constructs a remarkable, moving examination of the complex tensions and allegiances of family life and the conflict between men and women.

Lincoln Highway by Amor Towles – Part road trip, part quest, part search for revenge and forgiveness. Told over 10 days, it’s the story of three young men and an 8-year-old boy – all of whom have different ideas of the journey’s purpose. The reader is in good hands with Towles – a rollicking adventure.

The Night Watchman by Louise Erdrich – Through interwoven narratives, Erdrich writes of life in an Indian reservation in the post-war era. It’s not an idealized image; poverty, violence and alcoholism are common but it is a proud community conscious of a tradition and culture that long predates European settlement.
NONFICTION

Animal, Vegetable, Junk: A History of Food from Sustainable to Suicidal by Mark Bittman—a look at how history has been shaped by humanity's appetite for food, farmland, and the money behind it all—and how a better future is within reach.

Finding Freedom: A Cook's Story; Remaking a Life From Scratch by Erin French—The owner of the critically acclaimed The Lost Kitchen, a TIME world dining destination, writes a life-affirming memoir about survival, renewal, and finding a community to lift her up.