

## **Philip Ai**

### My Recommended Reading List of Five Books

Ray Bradbury, The Martian Chronicles

John Cheever, The Stories of John Cheever

John Updike, Run Rabbit Run

Clive Barker, Books of Blood Omnibus

Harlan Ellison, Strange Wine

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## **Rhea Almeida**

- Demon Copperhead by Barbara Kingsolver
- Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi
- White Tiger by Aravind Adiga
- Sea of Tranquility by Emily St. John Mandel
- Crying in H Mart by Michelle Zauner

A few reasons all these books speak to me are:

1. Almost all of these books have a protagonist (or multiple) with clear conflict to follow.
2. They paint powerful pictures of rooms, food, music, and settings.
3. Most of them take place across timelines, going back and forth to give the reader more context. This seamless transitioning from the present to flashbacks is something I hope to emulate in my novel.

Overrated book: Yellowface by R F Kuang. While I thought it was a fairly interesting premise, it ended unsatisfactorily and I believe it had some loose ends in the writing.

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## **Hans Aschim**

“A Fine Balance”

Rohinton Mistry

Long. Leisurely. Epic without feeling like an epic.

Characters and moments that are indelible.

“Beloved”

Toni Morrison

Absolutely obliterating. Read it as a young person. A less young person. And so on.

It’ll hit different every time.

“The Nickel Boys”

Colson Whitehead

Did I say obliterating? Well. Fuck. Here we go.

Historical, personal, unforgettable. Concise.

I keep going back.

“The Namesake”

Jhumpa Lahiri

Fable-like. AKA the hardest to do well.

Absolute gut punches. Absolute delight.

“Godwin”

Joseph O’Neill

Narrative-yet-literary-yet-modern-yet-page-turner-yet-“damn, he got my ass” and I cried.

Characters so visceral, I thought I was being surveilled.

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## **Linda Atlas**

1. Vanity Fair by William Makepeace Thackeray
2. The Best Man by Gore Vidal
3. Rumpole of the Bailey
4. Ten Days that Shook the World by John Reid;
5. The Naked Sun by Isaac Asimov.

## **Pompa Bannerjee**

Charlotte Brontë--*Jane Eyre*

Albert Camus--*The Stranger*

Jeffrey Eugenides—*Middlesex*

Chimamanda Ngozi--*Americanah*

Leo Tolstoy--*Anna Karenina*

1 overrated novel

F. Scott Fitzgerald—*The Great Gatsby*

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**Phil Berroll –**

1. Five novels I greatly admire:

1) ***Bullet Park* by John Cheever.**

2) **The *Rabbit* tetralogy by John Updike** (four books, yes, but together they form one continuous narrative).

3) ***Zuckerman Unbound* by Philip Roth.**

4) ***The Feast of the Goat* by Mario Vargas Llosa.**

5) ***Our Man in Havana* by Graham Greene.**

**Honorable Mention: *Jailbird* by Kurt Vonnegut Jr.**

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### **Hermione Brice**

The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone by J.K. Rowling

Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

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Jacklyn Celio

Five of my favorite books, (though I like many books it's hard to choose)

The Viscount who loves me- Julia Quinn

Romancing Mr. Bridgeton- Julia Quinn

Speak- Laurie Halse Anderson

Highland Warrior-Hannah Howell

The other side of the dark-Joan Lowary Nixon

I like historical romance (British and Scottish mostly) and some young adult books.

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### **Estelle Erasmus**

A Discovery of Witches by Deborah Harkness

The Ladies of the Secret Circus by Constance Sayers

A Witch in Time by Constance Sayers

Bummer Camp by Ann Garvin

The Last Caretaker by Jessica Strawser

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### **Karen Flyer**

1) Gone with the Wind - realistic fiction

2) Jodi Picoult - the Pact - realistic fiction

3) Time Travelers Wife - Audrey Niffenegger - science fiction

4) False Witness - Karin Slaughter - mystery

5) Wasted - Marya Hornbacher - memoir

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### **Lauren Jenkins**

Just Kids - Patti Smith

Slouching Towards Bethlehem - Joan Didion

A Book of Common Prayer - Joan Didion

Anna Karenina - Leo Tolstoy

My Life in France - Julia Child

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**Jeffery Rudell:**

*Cooking with Fernet Branca* by James Hamilton-Paterson

For the pitch-perfect character “voice”: arch, pretentious, condescending, somewhat bumbling, and very funny. (If you liked *A Confederacy of Dunces*...)

*The Giant’s House* by Elizabeth McCracken

For the way the author tells the story of a small-town librarian falling in love with what will become the world’s tallest man. A tiny romance told with monumental skill. (If you liked *A Man Called Ove*...)

*Geek Love* by Katherine Dunn

For its shocking, grotesque, and repulsive story told with love, charm, and empathy. You’ll hate that you love it. (If you liked *Trainspotting*...)

*A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles

For the way its author confines his character to a single setting (a while telling an unbounded story. Cinematic in both its lush descriptions and its character’s arc. (If you liked *All The Light We Cannot See*...)

*Moby-Dick* by Herman Melville

For the exhaustive, almost forensic level of observation the author brings to the story, for the 19<sup>th</sup> Century language, and for the very human cast of characters swept up in a modern, mythological plot. Read it aloud to best appreciate the New England cadences and visceral descriptions. (If you liked *The Count of Monte Christo*...)

Honorable Mention:

*Then We Came To The End* by Joshua Ferris

For its unusual use of the first person plural POV (“we” as opposed to “I”), and for its cautionary tale about the dangers (and allures) of being a corporate drone in a cubicle farms. If a book can be equated to a person, this one is dressed in khakis and a blue shirt, but carries a hipster beany in its back pocket. (If you liked *Bright Lights Big City*...)

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**Jake Rakov**

- A Farewell to Arms - Ernest Hemingway

- ●The DaVinci Code - Dan Brown
  - ●The Alienist - Caleb Carr
  - ●LA Confidential - James Ellroy
  - ●Things Fall Apart - Chinua Achebe
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## **Danny Williams**

To the Lighthouse

Crum

Day After Night - Anita Diamant

Crime and Punishment

The Prime Minister - Trollope