We Can’t Breathe: On Black Lives, White Lies, and the Art of Survival

Jabari Asim disrupts what Toni Morrison has exposed as the “Master Narrative” and replaces it with a story of black survival and persistence through art and community in the face of centuries of racism. These insightful and searing essays celebrate the vibrancy and strength of black history and culture in America.

Jabari Asim was born and raised in St. Louis, MO. For eleven years, he was an editor at the Washington Post, and he has been the editor in chief of Crisis magazine. He is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship in Creative Arts and the author of four books for adults, including The N Word, and six books for children.

Recommended if you like: Bunk by Kevin Young and We Gon’ Be Alright by Jeff Chang

Laurentian Divide

“Hilarious, smart, moving, and kind, Laurentian Divide is good for the soul.” —Richard Russo

Poignant portrayals of life on the edge in northern Minnesota border country, weaving in and out of each other’s reach, trying hard to do their best, the residents of this remote town in all their sweetness and sorrow remind us once more of the inescapable lurches of the heart and unexpected turns of our human comedy.

Sarah Stonich is the best-selling author of These Granite Islands; the critically acclaimed novel The Ice Chorus; and a memoir, Shelter: Off the Grid in the Mostly Magnetic North. Her novel-in-stories, Vacationland, is the first volume in her Northern Trilogy, followed by Laurentian Divide.

Recommended if you like: Wintering by Peter Geye

Limetown

“Readers will have a hard time putting this story down.” —Publishers Weekly

From the creators of the #1 podcast Limetown, an explosive prequel about a teenager who learns of a mysterious research facility where over three hundred people have disappeared, with clues that become the key to discovering the secrets of this strange town.

Cote Smith grew up in Leavenworth, KS, and on various army bases around the country. He earned his MFA from the University of Kansas, and his stories have been featured in One Story, Crazyhorse, and Third Coast, among other publications. His first novel, Hurt People, was a finalist for the 2017 PEN/Robert W. Bingham Prize for Debut Fiction.

Recommended if you like: Artemis by Andy Weir

Speechless

“Brilliant, breathtaking, and absolutely impossible to put down.” —Angie Tally, The Country Bookshop

How do you give a eulogy when you can’t think of one good thing to say? As 13-year-old Jimmy learns from his mother that he has to say a few words at his cousin’s funeral the next day, he attempts to navigate the odd social norms of a wake while racking his memory for decent memory to share. A poignant, funny, and candid look at grief, family secrets, difficult people, and learning to look behind the facade.

Adam P. Schmitt has been a middle-school educator for more than 15 years. Speechless is his debut middle-grade novel. He lives in Oswego, IL, with his wife and two sons.

Recommended if you like: The Thing about Jellyfish by Ali Benjamin
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