



# AMERICAN IMMIGRANTS

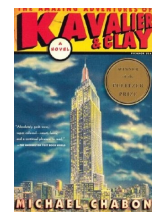


## **The Saint of Lost Things by Christopher Castellani**

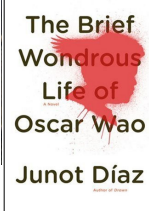
Even after seven years in Wilmington, Delaware, Maddalena Grasso is still filled with longing. She misses her mother and the familiar landscape of Italy. As she sews diligently at the factory to meet her daily quota, she dreams of finally finding herself with child, after trying for so long. And she yearns for the company of her husband Antonio, whose pursuit of the American Dream is leading nowhere, and whose night-time adventures threaten to destroy the fragile new life they've built.

## **The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay by Michael Chabon**

Joe Kavalier, a young Jewish artist, has just smuggled himself out of Nazi-invaded Prague and landed in New York City. His Brooklyn cousin Sammy Clay is looking for a partner to create heroes, stories, and art for the latest novelty to hit America: the comic book. Drawing on their own fears and dreams, Kavalier and Clay create the Escapist, the Monitor, and Luna Moth, inspired by the beautiful Rosa Saks, who will become linked by powerful ties to both men. An unforgettable story about American romance and possibility.



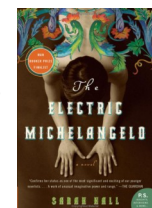
## **The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao by Junot Díaz**



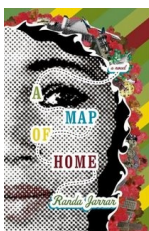
Paralleling his own experiences growing up in the Dominican Republic and New Jersey, Díaz has choreographed a family saga at once sanguinary and sexy that confronts the horrific brutality at loose during the reign of the dictator Trujillo. Díaz's besieged characters look to the supernatural for explanations and hope, from fukú, the curse unleashed when Europeans arrived on Hispaniola, to the forces dramatized in the works of science fiction and fantasy so beloved by the chubby ghetto nerd Oscar Wao, the brilliantly realized boy of conscience at the center of this whirlwind tale.

## **The Electric Michelangelo by Sarah Hall**

Cyril Parks grows up the only son of the widowed proprietor of the Bayview Hotel in Morecambe and wins an apprenticeship to the seedy rogue Eliot Riley, under whose tutelage he becomes a skilled tattoo artist. From his benevolent mother he learns not to be disgusted by the spectacle of human misery. Upon Reeda and Riley's deaths, Cy takes off for America and plies his trade among the vibrant array of freak shows at Coney Island. By 1940, he meets a local Russian chess champion and during the course of their love affair he inscribes 109 eye tattoos all over her body.



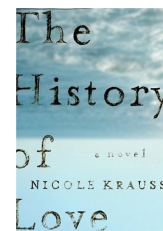
## **A Map of Home by Randa Jarrar**



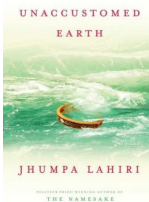
Jarrar's sparkling debut about an audacious Muslim girl growing up in Kuwait, Egypt and Texas is intimate, perceptive and very, very funny. Nidali Ammar is born in Boston to a Greek-Egyptian mother and a Palestinian father, and moves to Kuwait at a very young age, staying there until she's 13, when Iraq invades. A younger brother is born in Kuwait, rounding out a family of complex citizenships. During the occupation, the family flees to Alexandria in a wacky caravan, bribing soldiers along the way with whiskey and silk ties. But they don't stay long in Egypt, and after the war, Nidali's father finds work in Texas.

## **The History of Love by Nicole Krauss**

A novel that spans over 60 years and takes readers from Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe to present day Brighton Beach. At the center of each main character's psyche is the need to fill a void left empty by lost love. Leo Gursky is a retired locksmith who immigrates to New York after escaping SS officers in his native Poland, only to spend the last stage of his life terrified that no one will notice when he dies. Fourteen-year-old Alma Singer vacillates between memorializing her dead father and finding a way to lift her mother's veil of depression. At the same time, she's trying to save her brother Bird, who is convinced he may be the Messiah, from becoming a 10-year-old social pariah.



## **Unaccustomed Earth by Jhumpa Lahiri**

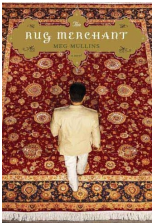
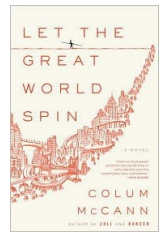


Exploring the secrets and complexities lying at the heart of family life and relationships, a collection of eight stories includes the title work, about a young mother in a new city whose father tends her garden while hiding a secret love affair.



### Let the Great World Spin by Colum McCann

It's August of 1974, a summer "hot and serious and full of death and betrayal," and Watergate and the Vietnam War make the world feel precarious. A stunned hush pauses the cacophonous universe of New York City as a man on a cable walks (repeatedly) between World Trade Center towers. This extraordinary, real-life feat by French funambulist Philippe Petit becomes the touchstone for stories that briefly submerge you in ten varied and intense lives—a street priest, heroin-addicted hookers, mothers mourning sons lost in war, young artists, a Park Avenue judge. All their lives are ordinary and unforgettable, overlapping at the edges, occasionally converging. And when they coalesce in the final pages, the moment hums with such grace that its memory might tighten your throat weeks later.

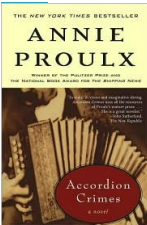


### The Rug Merchant by Meg Mullins

The titular carpet salesman has left his mother and his wife in Iran in order to make a new start in America. Told from his perspective, the narrative traces his subtle acculturation into Western life while he sets up shop and develops loyal customers. He plans for his wife to join him, but learns that she has divorced him for a Turkish salesman. Crushed, he finds temporary, self-loathing comfort in a prostitute. Only when he meets Stella, a Barnard freshman, does he begin to see a way out of his isolation. Like him, Stella is an outsider struggling with loss and looking for connection, but he must first resolve his conflicted feelings about women and sex and American culture.

### Netherland by Joseph O'Neill

Dutch banker Hans has been abandoned by his wife and son, who have decamped to London. Defeated by his seemingly failed marriage, Hans takes up residence at the Chelsea Hotel and entertains his childhood love of cricket by joining a league made up of West Indian New Yorkers. Here he meets Chuck, a charismatic Trinidadian entrepreneur who introduces him to the outer reaches of New York's boroughs and marginal cultures, while creating a friendship with Hans that is both perplexing and satisfying. O'Neill's poignant and tragic vision of New York is paired beautifully with the protagonist's reflection on his past failures and moments of happiness.

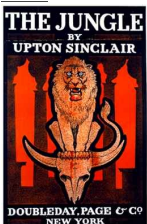
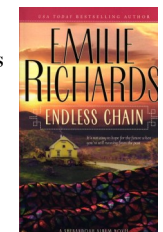


### Accordion Crimes by Annie Proulx

Proulx's third novel begins in 1890 with the passage to "La Merica" of a Sicilian accordion maker and his small son, and their ordeal in New Orleans, where the (nameless) father finds work on the docks and meets a violent fate that will become the pattern engulfing virtually all of the story's successive characters. Proulx then telescopes the lives of those into whose hands the Sicilian's button accordion passes—whether it's given, sold, or stolen—through the next hundred years.

### Endless Chain by Emilie Richards

Toms Brook, Virginia might seem an unlikely place to harbor an international fugitive, and yet for Elisa Martinez, it's a perfect hiding place. Fiercely protective of its privacy and independence, it welcomes outsiders, at least until the area's Hispanic community grows to proportions that make the locals uncomfortable. When an outreach center at the community church becomes a target for vandals, activist preacher Sam Kinkade is presented with a serious challenge. Hiring Elisa as the church's new sexton just might be the answer to the church's—and Sam's—prayers, although Sam doesn't realize that the enigmatic Elisa is wanted in her native Guatemala on false murder charges.

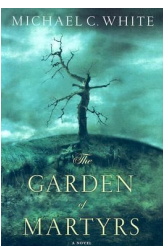
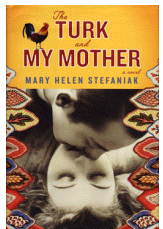


### The Jungle by Upton Sinclair

This muckraking masterpiece centers on Jurgis Rudkus, a Lithuanian immigrant working in Chicago's infamous Packingtown. Instead of finding the American Dream, Rudkus and his family inhabit a brutal, soul-crushing urban jungle dominated by greedy bosses, pitiless con-men, and corrupt politicians. While Sinclair's main target was the industry's appalling labor conditions, the reading public was most outraged by the disgusting filth and contamination in American food that his novel exposed. As a result, President Theodore Roosevelt demanded an official investigation, which quickly led to the passage of the Pure Food and Drug laws. For a work of fiction to have such an impact outside its literary context is extremely rare.

### The Turk and My Mother by Mary Helen Stefaniak

Storytelling is at the heart of Stefaniak's lovingly crafted volume of three interwoven family tales (subtitled "A Novel"), which captures the history of a Croatian-American family settled in Milwaukee after World War I. The book's Decameron-esque framework is set from the beginning as George, the first-generation American son of Josef and Agnes, is on his deathbed, surrounded by his adult children. The stories he tells about life in Milwaukee in the 1930s lead to stories-within-stories told by his grandmother Staramajka, the family matriarch, who steals the show.



### The Garden of Martyrs by Michael C. White

Based on the true story of two Irish Catholic immigrants, Dominic Daley and James Halligan, arrested for a brutal murder in early 19th century Boston. The two Irishmen denied any knowledge of the crime, spent five months in jail and only two days before their trial were they allowed to consult with a lawyer. The trial, a mockery of justice, lasted only one day. The two were sentenced to be hanged by the neck and, as the presiding judge said, "their bodies dissected and anatomized." Michael White has used his considerable talent to capture the political, social and cultural aspects of New England. In this heartbreaking story, he shows that the anti-Catholic and anti-foreign sentiments of that period in some ways reflect ongoing prejudice today.