October 11, 2018: The North Water - Ian McGuire
We begin the year with a cracking good yarn; from the NYTimes review: “The North Water, Ian McGuire’s savage new novel about a 19th-century Arctic whaling expedition, is a great white shark of a book--swift, terrifying, relentless and unstoppable. Mr. McGuire is such a natural storyteller--and recounts his tale here with such authority and verve--that The North Water swiftly immerses the reader in a fully imagined world. He has written an allusion-filled novel that still manages to feel original, a violent tale of struggle and survival in a cinematically beautiful landscape.” Fiction.

November 8, 2018: The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates - Wes Moore
“Two kids named Wes Moore were born blocks apart within a year of each other. Both grew up fatherless in similar Baltimore neighborhoods and had difficult childhoods; both hung out on street corners with their crews; both ran into trouble with the police. How, then, did one grow up to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated veteran, White House Fellow, and business leader, while the other ended up a convicted murderer serving a life sentence?” (Amazon). Nonfiction.

January 10, 2019: Tomb of the Unknown Racist - Blanche McCrary Boyd
“Tomb of the Unknown Racist is a thrilling novel set in the shadow of the Oklahoma City bombing, the subculture of white supremacy, and deep state government. A family drama set against political and racial struggle by a stunning writer whose work has offered a resonant survey of politics and activism across the American experience” (Amazon). Fiction.

February 14, 2019: The Doctors’ Plague: Germs, Childbed Fever, and the Strange Story of Ignac Semmelweis - Sherwin Nuland
What happens when a man discovers why women die after giving birth—but is unable to convince his fellow physicians that they are responsible? Why, you kill the messenger, of course. NonFiction.

March 14, 2019: An Iliad - Peterson and O’Hare
“From Robert Fagles's acclaimed translation, An Iliad telescopes Homer’s Trojan War epic into a gripping monologue that captures both the heroism and horror of war. Crafted around the stories of Achilles and Hector, in language that is by turns poetic and conversational, An Iliad brilliantly refreshes this world classic. What emerges is a powerful piece of theatrical storytelling that vividly drives home the timelessness of mankind’s compulsion toward violence” (Amazon). Dramatic Monologue.

April 11, 2019: Citizen: An American Lyric - Claudia Rankine
“Claudia Rankine's bold new book recounts mounting racial aggressions in ongoing encounters in twenty-first-century daily life and in the media. Some of these encounters are slights, seeming slips of the tongue, and some are intentional offenses in the classroom, at the supermarket, at home, on the tennis court with Serena Williams and the soccer field with Zinedine Zidane, online, on TV—everywhere, all the time. The accumulative stresses come to bear on a person's ability to speak, perform, and stay alive” (Amazon). Poetry, sort of.

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