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The Last Concubine The Shogun's Queen The Courtesan and the Samurai Madame Sadayakko Across A Bridge Of Dreams On the Narrow Road to the Deep North In the Shelter of the Pine Geisha The China Lover A Geisha's Journey The Mistress of Paris The Strangeness of Beauty Women of the Pleasure Quarters It Can't Always be Caviar Anagram Solver East of the Sun De laatste concubine / druk 1 The Empress of Bright Moon The Scent of Sake The Courtesan Autobiography of a Geisha Concubines and Courtesans Before The Storm Whispers of Heaven Snow Flower and the Secret Fan Dracula in Visual Media Chocolat The Painted Veil Dreamtime Encyclopedia of Prostitution and Sex Work The ABC's of Kissing Boys Empress Orchid Greek Prostitutes in the Ancient Mediterranean, 800 BCE–200 CE On the Narrow Road At the Japanese Table Wolfsangel The Female as Subject Adventuring in Dictionaries On the Night of the Seventh Moon An Almond for a Parrot

Snow Flower and the Secret Fan Jan 28 2021 Lily is the daughter of a humble farmer, and to her family she is just another expensive mouth to feed. Then the local matchmaker delivers startling news: if Lily's feet are bound properly, they will be flawless. In nineteenth-century China, where a woman's eligibility is judged by the shape and size of her feet, this is extraordinary good luck. Lily now has the power to make a good marriage and change the fortunes of her family. To prepare for her new life, she must undergo the agonies of footbinding, learn nu shu, the famed secret women's writing, and make a very special friend, Snow Flower. But a bitter reversal of fortune is about to change everything.

Encyclopedia of Prostitution and Sex Work Aug 23 2020 This major 2-volume set is the first to treat in an inclusive reference what is usually considered a societal failing and the underside of sexuality and economic survival.

Dracula in Visual Media Dec 27 2020 This is a comprehensive sourcebook on the world's most famous vampire, with more than 700 citations of domestic and international Dracula films, television programs, documentaries, adult features, animated works, and video games, as well as nearly a thousand comic books and stage adaptations. While they vary in length, significance, quality, genre, moral character, country, and format, each of the cited works adopts some form of Bram Stoker's original creation, and Dracula himself, or a recognizable vampiric semblance of Dracula, appears in each. The book includes contributions from Dacre Stoker, David J. Skal, Laura Helen Marks, Dodd Alley, Mitch Frye, Ian Holt, Robert Eighteen-Bisang, and J. Gordon Melton.

On the Narrow Road Apr 18 2020 Following the eight-hundred-mile trek of Japanese poet Matsuo Basho, this journey into a lost Japan explores the possibilities of an older, simpler way of life that still exists over three hundred years later. In 1689, acclaimed Japanese poet Matsuo Basho set out on his last and longest journey to explore the remote northern provinces of his country. In a famous work of Japanese literature, Basho shares an account of his experience that is rich in strange, surreal, and comic encounters along the road. Three hundred years later, inspired by Basho's writing and his appreciation of Japan, Lesley Downer sets off on the same journey the famous poet took before her. As she walks, Downer encounters hitchhiking hermit priests, meets people who had never seen a Westerner, and dines on flowers and sauteed grasshoppers, leading her to discover a piece of Japanese culture that many believed had vanished centuries ago.

The ABC's of Kissing Boys Jul 22 2020 When sixteen-year-old Parker Stanhope takes kissing lessons from the freshman across the street as part of her plan to get on the varsity soccer team, a relationship blossoms that threatens her popularity at school and must be kept secret from their feuding fathers.

Autobiography of a Geisha Jun 01 2021 The glamorous world of Kyoto's geisha is familiar to many readers but Sayo Masuda's tale tells a different story, one that bears little resemblance to the elegant geisha quarters frequented by illustrious patrons. Masuda was a geisha at a rural hot-spring

Geisha Jul 14 2022 Ever since Westerners arrived in Japan, we have been intrigued by geisha. This fascination has spawned a wealth of fictional creations from Madame Butterfly to Arthur Golden's *Memoirs of a Geisha*. The reality of the geisha's existence has rarely been described. Contrary to popular opinion, geisha are not prostitutes but literally arts people. Their accomplishments might include singing, dancing or playing a musical instrument but, above all, they are masters of the art of conversation, soothing worries of highly paid businessmen who can afford their attentions. The real secret history of the geisha is explored here.

The Last Concubine Feb 21 2023 Epic history and romance combine in a sweeping novel featuring the beautiful mistress of the last shogun emperor.

It Can't Always be Caviar Jan 08 2022

Whispers of Heaven Feb 26 2021 After yeras of schooling in England, Jesmond Corbett finds little has changed on her family's estate along the sea-battered coast of Tasmania. Betrothed since childhood to a wealthy neighbor, Jessie comes home determined to conform to the expectations of her family and the society in which they live. But nothing in Jessie's life has prepared her for the mysterious stranger who works in the stables, a man with searing eyes who haunts her dreams and awakens passions she never knew existed. Irishman Lucas Gallagher arrived on the island in chains, a convict sentenced to a lifetime of slave labor for the English gentry. For four yeras he has lived a dead man's existence, using every spare moment to plan his escape. But when he meets Jessie, she touches his cold, angry heart. And although their love has no future, he finds himself

unable to deny the longings of his battered soul -- longings that threaten to destroy what may be his last chance to reach for freedom.

The Mistress of Paris Apr 11 2022 Valtresse de la Bigne was a celebrated nineteenth-century Parisian courtesan. She was painted by Manet and inspired Emile Zola, who immortalised her in his scandalous novel *Nana*. Her rumoured affairs with Napoleon III and the future Edward VII kept gossip columns full. But her glamorous existence hid a dark secret: she was no Comtesse. She was born into abject poverty, raised on a squalid Paris backstreet; the lowest of the low. Yet she transformed herself into an enchantress who possessed a small fortune, three mansions, fabulous carriages, and art the envy of connoisseurs across Europe. A consummate show-woman, she ensured that her life – and even her death – remained shrouded in just enough mystery to keep her audience hungry for more. Catherine Hewitt's biography tells, for the first time ever in English, the forgotten story of a remarkable woman who, though her roots were lowly, never stopped aiming high.

Across A Bridge Of Dreams Oct 17 2022 In the brave new Japan of the 1870s, Taka and Nobu meet as children and fall in love; but their relationship will test the limits of society. Unified after a bitter civil war, Japan is rapidly turning into a modern country with rickshaws, railways and schools for girls. Commoners can marry their children into any class, and the old hatred between north and south is over - or so it seems. Taka is from the powerful southern Satsuma clan which now dominates the country, and her father, General Kitaoka, is a leader of the new government. Nobu, however, is from the northern Aizu clan, massacred by the Satsuma in the civil war. Defeated and reduced to poverty, his family has sworn revenge on the Satsuma. Taka and Nobu's love is unacceptable to both their families and must be kept secret, but what they cannot foresee is how quickly the tables will turn. Many southern samurai become disillusioned with the new regime, which has deprived them of their swords, status and honour. Taka's father abruptly leaves Tokyo and returns to the southern island of Kyushu, where trouble is brewing. When he and his clansmen rise in rebellion, the government sends its newly-created army to put them down. Nobu and his brothers have joined this army, and his brothers now see their chance of revenge on the Satsuma. But Nobu will have to fight and maybe kill Taka's father and brother, while Taka now has to make a terrible choice - between her family and the man she loves ...

An Almond for a Parrot Oct 13 2019 'shades of Sarah Waters...irresistible' – The Guardian 'I would like to make myself the heroine of this story – an innocent victim led astray. But alas sir, I would be lying...'

The Female as Subject Jan 16 2020 *The Female as Subject* presents 11 essays by an international group of scholars from Europe, Japan, and North America examining what women of different social classes read, what books were produced specifically for women, and the genres in which women themselves chose to write. The authors explore the different types of education women obtained and the levels of literacy they achieved, and they uncover women's participation in the production of books, magazines, and speeches. The resulting depiction of women as readers and writers is also enhanced by thirty black-and-white illustrations. For too long, women have been largely absent from accounts of cultural production in early modern Japan. By foregrounding women, the essays in this book enable us to rethink what we know about Japanese society during these centuries. The result is a new history of women as readers, writers, and culturally active agents. *The Female as Subject* is essential reading for all students and teachers of Japan during the Edo and Meiji periods. It also provides valuable comparative data for scholars of the history of literacy and the book in East Asia.

Concubines and Courtesans Apr 30 2021 *Concubines and Courtesans: Women and Slavery in Islamic History* contains sixteen essays on enslaved and freed women across medieval and pre-modern Islamic social history. The essays consider questions of slavery, gender, social networking, cultural production, sexuality, Islamic family law, and religion in the shaping of Near Eastern and Islamic society over time.

A Geisha's Journey May 12 2022 From the cobbled streets where Komomo walks in her elaborate dress to the inner sanctums of her dressing room, these pages offer a rare look at a contemporary teen's journey to becoming a geisha, photographed in full color by Naoyuki Ogino. This is the story of a contemporary Japanese teenager who, in a search for an identity, became fascinated with the world of geisha, and discovered in herself the will and the commitment to embark on the many years of apprenticeship necessary to become one. It is also the story of a young Japanese photographer who grew up

The Empress of Bright Moon Sep 04 2021 "The author's talent for dramatic, well-timed dialogue, and portrayal of women's friendships and emotions—especially dislikes, jealousy, and fear - intensifies the reader's understanding of palace intrigue."—Booklist, STARRED Review The time for taking hold of her destiny is now At the moment of the Emperor's death, everything changes in the palace. Mei, his former concubine, is free, and Pheasant, the heir and Mei's lover, is proclaimed as the new Emperor, heralding a new era in China. But just when Mei believes she's closer to her dream, Pheasant's chief wife, Lady Wang, powerful and unpredictable, turns against Mei and takes unthinkable measures to stop her. The power struggle that ensues will determine Mei's fate—and that of China. Surrounded by enemies within the palace that she calls home, Mei continues her journey to the throne in *The Empress of Bright Moon*, the second book in Weina Dai Randel's acclaimed duology. Only by fighting back against those who wish her harm will Mei be able to realize her destiny as the most powerful woman in China.

In the Shelter of the Pine Aug 15 2022 In the early eighteenth century, the noblewoman ?gimachi Machiko composed a memoir of Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu, the powerful samurai for whom she had served as a concubine for twenty years. Machiko assisted Yoshiyasu in his ascent to the rank of chief adjutant to the Tokugawa shogun. She kept him in good graces with the imperial court, enabled him to study poetry with aristocratic teachers and have his compositions read by the retired emperor, and gave birth to two of his sons. Writing after Yoshiyasu's retirement, she recalled it all—from the glittering formal visits of the shogun and his entourage to the passage of the seasons as seen from her apartments in the Yanagisawa mansion. *In the Shelter of the Pine* is the most significant work of literature by a woman of Japan's early modern era. Featuring Machiko's keen eye for detail, strong narrative voice, and polished prose studded with allusions to Chinese and Japanese classics, this memoir sheds light on everything from the social world of the Tokugawa elite to the role of literature in women's lives. Machiko modeled her

story on *The Tale of Genji*, illustrating how the eleventh-century classic continued to inspire its female readers and provide them with the means to make sense of their experiences. Elegant, poetic, and revealing, *In the Shelter of the Pine* is a vivid portrait of a distant world and a vital addition to the canon of Japanese literature available in English.

Adventuring in Dictionaries Dec 15 2019 *Adventuring in Dictionaries: New Studies in the History of Lexicography* brings together seventeen papers on the making of dictionaries from the sixteenth century to the present day. The first five treat English and French lexicography in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Heberto Fernandez and Monique Cormier discuss the outside matter of French–English bilingual dictionaries; Kusujiro Miyoshi re-assesses the influence of Robert Cawdrey; John Considine uncovers the biography of Henry Cockeram; Antonella Amatuzzi discusses Pierre Borel’s use of his predecessors; and Fredric Dolezal investigates multi-word units in the dictionary of John Wilkins and William Lloyd. Linda Mitchell’s account of dictionaries as behaviour guides in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries leads on to Giovanni Iamartino’s presentation of words associated with women in the dictionary of Samuel Johnson, and Thora Van Male’s of the ornaments in the *Encyclopédie*. Nineteenth-century and subsequent topics are treated by Anatoly Liberman on the growth of the English etymological dictionary; Julie Coleman on dictionaries of rhyming slang; Laura Pinnavaia on Richardson’s *New Dictionary* and the changing vocabulary of English; Peter Gilliver on early editorial decisions and reconsiderations in the making of the *Oxford English Dictionary*; Anne Dykstra on the use of Latin as the metalanguage in Joost Halbertsma’s *Lexicon Frisicum*; Laura Santone on the “*Dictionnaire critique*” serialized in Georges Bataille’s Surrealist review *Documents*; Sylvia Brown on the stories of missionary lexicography behind the *Eskimo–English Dictionary* of 1925; and Michael Adams on the legacies of the *Early Modern English Dictionary* project. The diverse critical perspectives of the leading lexicographers and historians of lexicography who contribute to this volume are united by a shared interest in the close reading of dictionaries, and a shared concern with the making and reading of dictionaries as human activities, which cannot be understood without attention to the lives of the people who undertook them.

Greek Prostitutes in the Ancient Mediterranean, 800 BCE–200 CE May 20 2020 *Greek Prostitutes in the Ancient Mediterranean, 800 BCE–200 CE* challenges the often-romanticized view of the prostitute as an urbane and liberated courtesan by examining the social and economic realities of the sex industry in Greco-Roman culture. Departing from the conventional focus on elite society, these essays consider the Greek prostitute as displaced foreigner, slave, and member of an urban underclass. The contributors draw on a wide range of material and textual evidence to discuss portrayals of prostitutes on painted vases and in the literary tradition, their roles at symposia (Greek drinking parties), and their place in the everyday life of the polis. Reassessing many assumptions about the people who provided and purchased sexual services, this volume yields a new look at gender, sexuality, urbanism, and economy in the ancient Mediterranean world.

Empress Orchid Jun 20 2020 To rescue her family from poverty and avoid marrying her slope-shouldered cousin, seventeen-year-old Orchid competes to be one of the Emperor's wives. When she is chosen as a lower-ranking concubine she enters the erotically charged and ritualised Forbidden City. But beneath its immaculate façade lie whispers of murders and ghosts, and the thousands of concubines will stoop to any lengths to bear the Emperor's son. Orchid trains herself in the art of pleasuring a man, bribes her way into the royal bed, and seduces the monarch, drawing the attention of dangerous foes. Little does she know that China will collapse around her, and that she will be its last Empress.

Women of the Pleasure Quarters Feb 09 2022 Provides insight into a the enchanting underworld of geisha society.

Madame Sadayakko Nov 18 2022 The author of *Women of the Pleasure Quarters* shares the story of the famous geisha whose life inspired Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, from her training and participation in secret geisha traditions to her defection from her lucrative career to marry the penniless actor and political maverick Otojuro Kawakami and her rise to international celebrity. Reprint.

Before The Storm Mar 30 2021 Buried secrets can change a family's life forever... Judith Lennox's *Before the Storm* is a gripping, multi-generational family drama set in London and Devon, in which the secrets of the past have powerful and emotional repercussions. Perfect for fans of Rachel Hore and Katherine Webb. On an autumn day in 1909, wealthy young Richard Finborough catches sight of twenty-year-old Isabel Zeale at the harbour at Lynmouth in Devon. Her beauty captivates him. Aware of shameful secrets in her past, Isabel has no intention of letting anyone into her life, but Richard's persistence and ardour eventually win him her trust - and her hand in marriage. The decades pass and Isabel and Richard raise a family through the turbulent times of the First World War and the 1920s. As her children reach adulthood, Isabel is convinced her secret is safe - until an old acquaintance emerges from the shadows, turning her world upside down. To protect the happiness of those she loves most, Isabel must find the courage to confront what came before, and live with the consequences... What readers are saying about *Before the Storm*: 'The characters are both complex and absorbing and the storyline is so compelling that you don't want to stop reading even at two in the morning!' 'A sweeping, old-fashioned family saga to be savoured, with a host of memorable characters who'll linger in the mind long after the pages are turned, and a story that will transport you back to a bygone era' 'A very imaginative saga with an unusual twist of mystery'

Wolfsangel Feb 15 2020 The Viking king Authun leads his men on a raid against an Anglo-Saxon village. Men and women are killed indiscriminately, but Authun demands that no child be touched. He is acting on prophecy—a prophecy which tells him that the Saxons have stolen a child from the gods. If Authun, in turn, takes the child and raises him as an heir, the child will lead his people to glory. But Authun discovers not one child, but twin baby boys. After ensuring that his faithful warriors, witnesses to what has happened, die during the raid, Authun takes the children and their mother home, back to the witches who live on the troll wall. And he places his destiny in their hands. So begins a stunning multivolume fantasy epic that will take a werewolf from his beginnings as the heir to a brutal Viking king down through the ages. It is a journey that will see him hunt for his lost love through centuries and lives, and see the endless battle between the wolf, Odin, and Loki, the eternal trickster, spill over into countless bloody conflicts from our history and our lives. This is the myth of the werewolf as it has never been told before and

marks the beginning of an extraordinary new fantasy series. From the Trade Paperback edition.

Anagram Solver Dec 07 2021 Anagram Solver is the essential guide to cracking all types of quiz and crossword featuring anagrams. Containing over 200,000 words and phrases, Anagram Solver includes plural noun forms, palindromes, idioms, first names and all parts of speech. Anagrams are grouped by the number of letters they contain with the letters set out in alphabetical order so that once the letters of an anagram are arranged alphabetically, finding the solution is as easy as locating the word in a dictionary.

The Courtesan Jul 02 2021 A sweeping historical epic of a young Chinese woman in imperial Europe - perfect for fans of *Memoirs of a Geisha* The year is 1881, the era of China's humiliation at the hands of imperialist Europe. Seven-year-old Sai Jinhua is left alone and unprotected, her life transformed after her mandarin father's summary execution for the crime of speaking the truth. Now an orphan, Jinhua is sold to a brothel and put to work as a 'money tree', enduring the very worst of human nature thanks to the friendship and wisdom of the crippled brothel maid. But when an elegant but troubled scholar takes Jinhua as his concubine, her world begins to expand. With him she will travel to Vienna, seeing things she has never imagined, and opening her heart to dreams she has never dared to dream . . . Based on the true story of Sai Jinhua, Alexandra Curry's debut novel, *The Courtesan*, travels from the depths of the Chinese empire to the palaces of Vienna, and tells the true story of one young woman's journey from the depths of poverty to the centre of Chinese history.

East of the Sun Nov 06 2021 The captivating million copy bestseller of three young women in search of freedom and love in 1920s India. India 1928. A land of heat, dust and dreams, and the promise of love ... Three young women are on their way to India, each with a new life in mind. Rose, a beautiful but naïve bride-to-be, is anxious about leaving her family and marrying a man she hardly knows. Victoria, her bridesmaid couldn't be happier to get away from her overbearing mother, and is determined to find herself a husband. And Viva, their inexperienced chaperone, is in search of the India of her childhood, ghosts from the past and freedom. Each of them has their own reason for leaving their homeland but the hopes and secrets they carry can do little to prepare them for what lies ahead in India. From the parties of the wealthy Bombay socialites, to the ragged orphans on Tamarind Street, *EAST OF THE SUN* is an utterly engaging novel that will captivate readers everywhere. Praise for Julia Gregson: 'A rich historical novel' *Sunday Times* 'I adored this wonderful story. From the moment I began reading I truly felt as if I was there. Astonishingly good' Dinah Jefferies, author of *The Tea Planter's Wife* 'Lively, atmospheric novel' *Sunday Telegraph* 'Exotic, decadent, dangerous and terrific storytelling' *Woman & Home* 'What a gorgeous read. Exciting, romantic, unpredictable and funny. I didn't want it to end' Tracey Ullman

The Strangeness of Beauty Mar 10 2022 After several years in the U.S. a Japanese woman returns to Japan, taking along a niece raised in the U.S. The novel describes their adjustment to Japanese culture, different for each generation.

The Scent of Sake Aug 03 2021 She was taught to submit, to obey . . . but she dreamed of an empire. The sole heir to the House of Omura, a venerable family of Kobe sake brewers, nineteen-year-old Rie hears but cannot heed her mother's advice: that in nineteenth-century Japan, a woman must "kill the self" or her life will be too difficult to bear. In this strict, male-dominated society, women may not even enter the brewery—and repressive tradition demands that Rie turn over her family's business to the inept philanderer she's been forced to marry. She is even expected to raise her husband's children by another woman—a geisha—so that they can eventually run the Omura enterprise. But Rie's pride will not allow her to relinquish what is rightfully hers. With courage, cunning, brilliance, and skill, she is ready to confront every threat that arises before her—from prejudice to treachery to shipwrecks to the insidious schemes of relentless rivals—in her bold determination to forge a magnificent dynasty...and to, impossibly, succeed. An epic and breathtaking saga that spans generations as it sweeps through the heart of a century, Joyce Lebra's *The Scent of Sake* is a vivid and powerful entry into another world...and an unforgettable portrait of a woman who would not let that world defeat her.

Dreamtime Sep 23 2020 In *Dreamtime* Venetia Welby paints a terrifying and captivating vision of our near future and takes us on a vertiginous odyssey into the unknown.

De laatste concubine / druk 1 Oct 05 2021 Eind 19e eeuw wordt een meisje ingewijd in de strenge hofregels in het paleis van de shogun en wordt diens officiële concubine, totdat er oorlog uitbreekt.

The Shogun's Queen Jan 20 2023 Only one woman can save her world from barbarian invasion but to do so will mean sacrificing everything she holds dear - love, loyalty and maybe life itself . . . Japan, and the year is 1853. Growing up among the samurai of the Satsuma Clan, in Japan's deep south, the fiery, beautiful and headstrong Okatsu has - like all the clan's women - been encouraged to be bold, taught to wield the halberd, and to ride a horse. But when she is just seventeen, four black ships appear. Bristling with cannon and manned by strangers who to the Japanese eyes are barbarians, their appearance threatens Japan's very existence. And turns Okatsu's world upside down. Chosen by her feudal lord, she has been given a very special role to play. Given a new name - Princess Atsu - and a new destiny, she is the only one who can save the realm. Her journey takes her to Edo Castle, a place so secret that it cannot be marked on any map. There, sequestered in the Women's Palace - home to three thousand women, and where only one man may enter: the shogun - she seems doomed to live out her days. But beneath the palace's immaculate facade, there are whispers of murders and ghosts. It is here that Atsu must complete her mission and discover one last secret - the secret of the man whose fate is irrevocably linked to hers: the shogun himself . . .

On the Narrow Road to the Deep North Sep 16 2022 The author retraces the journey in 1689 of Matsuo Basho, described in his *Oku no hosomichi* = The narrow road to the deep north.

On the Night of the Seventh Moon Nov 13 2019 For generations, Victoria Holt has dazzled and entertained millions of readers with her spine-tingling novels of romantic suspense. *On the Night of the Seventh Moon* is one of her most evocative, magical, and chilling. Come take a journey into a dark and shadowy forest where nothing is as it seems.... On the night of the seventh moon, according to ancient Black Forest legend, Loke, the god of mischief, is abroad in the world. It is a night for singing and dancing. And it is a night for love. Helena Trant was enchanted by everything she found in the Black Forest—its people, its

mysterious castles, its legends and lore. Especially its legends of love. Until the day she started to live one of them and the enchantment turned suddenly into a terrifying nightmare....

The Painted Veil Oct 25 2020 Garstin, a pretty upper-middle class debutante, squanders her early youth amusing herself by living a social high life, during which her domineering mother attempts to arrange a "brilliant match" for her.

At the Japanese Table Mar 18 2020 The acclaimed book that demystified Japanese cuisine for home cooks returns with a newly designed cover as lovely as the photo presentations within. Over 90 exquisite recipes cover every aspect of modern Japanese meals from elaborate kaiseki dinners--to simply prepared noodle bowls for a casual family supper. The dozens of step-by-step technique illustrations make preparing even the most complicated dishes as easy as ichi, ni, san. Vibrant color photographs take fans of Japanese cookery on a culinary tour of the country, exploring the feasts and festivals, restaurants, sushi bars, street stalls, and even the temples for a taste of this intriguing land. Along the way discover why, as a result of their diet, the Japanese live longer than anyone else in the world. Itadaki masu! Enjoy.

The China Lover Jun 13 2022 When Sidney Vanoven is sent to occupied Japan, in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, it is his dream posting. By day, he works in the censor's office watching Japanese films; at night he immerses himself in the sensual pleasures of Tokyo. His job leads him into the circle of the beautiful film star Shirley Yamaguchi, a passionate and indomitable woman, whose wartime secrets hint at deception and betrayal. As he learns more of her story it seems to echo Japan's own dark secret. In *The China Lover*, Ian Buruma has created an exhilarating saga of war-torn Japan that is epic in scale, richly imagined and vividly populated. It is quite simply unforgettable.

Chocolat Nov 25 2020 When the exotic stranger Vianne Rocher arrives in the old French village of Lansquenet and opens a chocolate boutique called "La Celeste Praline" directly across the square from the church, Father Reynaud identifies her as a serious danger to his flock. It is the beginning of Lent: the traditional season of self-denial. The priest says she'll be out of business by Easter. To make matters worse, Vianne does not go to church and has a penchant for superstition. Like her mother, she can read Tarot cards. But she begins to win over customers with her smiles, her intuition for everyone's favourites, and her delightful confections. Her shop provides a place, too, for secrets to be whispered, grievances aired. She begins to shake up the rigid morality of the community. Vianne's plans for an Easter Chocolate Festival divide the whole community. Can the solemnity of the Church compare with the pagan passion of a chocolate éclair? For the first time, here is a novel in which chocolate enjoys its true importance, emerging as an agent of transformation. Rich, clever, and mischievous, reminiscent of a folk tale or fable, this is a triumphant read with a memorable character at its heart. Says Harris: "You might see [Vianne] as an archetype or a mythical figure. I prefer to see her as the lone gunslinger who blows into the town, has a showdown with the man in the black hat, then moves on relentless. But on another level she is a perfectly real person with real insecurities and a very human desire for love and acceptance. Her qualities too - kindness, love, tolerance - are very human." Vianne and her young daughter Anouk, come into town on Shrove Tuesday. "Carnivals make us uneasy," says Harris, "because of what they represent: the residual memory of blood sacrifice (it is after all from the word "carne" that the term arises), of pagan celebration. And they represent a loss of inhibition; carnival time is a time at which almost anything is possible." The book became an international best-seller, and was optioned to film quickly. The Oscar-nominated movie, with its star-studded cast including Juliette Binoche (*The English Patient*) and Judi Dench (*Shakespeare in Love*), was directed by Lasse Hallstrom, whose previous film *The Cider House Rules* (based on a John Irving novel) also looks at issues of community and moral standards, though in a less lighthearted vein. The idea for the book came from a comment her husband made one day while he was immersed in a football game on TV. "It was a throwaway comment, designed to annoy and it did. It was along the lines of...Chocolate is to women what football is to men..." The idea stuck, and Harris began thinking that "people have these conflicting feelings about chocolate, and that a lot of people who have very little else in common relate to chocolate in more or less the same kind of way. It became a kind of challenge to see exactly how much of a story I could get which was uniquely centred around chocolate." Rich with metaphor and gorgeous writing...sit back and gorge yourself on *Chocolat*.

The Courtesan and the Samurai Dec 19 2022 1868. In Japan's exotic pleasure quarters, sex is for sale and the only forbidden fruit is love ... Hana is just seventeen when her husband goes to war, leaving her alone and vulnerable. When enemy soldiers attack her house she flees across the shattered city of Tokyo and takes refuge in the Yoshiwara, its famous pleasure-quarters. There she is forced to become a courtesan. Yozo, brave, loyal and a brilliant swordsman, is pledged to the embattled shogun. He sails to the frozen north to join his rebel comrades for a desperate last stand. Defeated, he makes his way south to the only place where a man is beyond the reach of the law - the Yoshiwara. There in the Nightless City where three thousand courtesans mingle with geishas and jesters, the battered fugitive meets the beautiful courtesan. But each has a secret so terrible that once revealed it will threaten their very lives ...

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