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Varamo Varamo How I Became a Nun Varamo The Seamstress and the Wind Shantytown An Episode in the Life of a Landscape Painter The Miracle Cures of Dr. Aira Artforum The Linden Tree The Literary Conference (New Directions Pearls) The Musical Brain: And Other Stories The Divorce Dinner Birthday Ghosts Ema the Captive The Conversations Melodrome The Retrospective The Incredible Here and Now The Little Buddhist Monk & The Proof Argentina, the Great Estancias Before She Met Me The Dark Wet Traveler of the Century The Year of the Flood Tequila Blue The Hare Almost Never Street to Street The House of Ulysses Dog Day Stepping Out An Open Secret Carpentaria Tattoo The Garden Book Enough About Love Bolívar's Afterlife in the Americas

This new novel by French-Australian writer Catherine Rey begins in provincial France in the 1970s. Dressed in borrowed platform shoes and a cape, the seventeen-year-old Catherine is rejecting family and schooling to move in with her lover Marco. Flouting convention and the law, the couple flees to Belgium. Written in an intense, high-energy style, *STEPPING OUT* is a cry of rage against the oppression of family life - a manifesto for the next generation. *Street to Street* is one of Brian Castro's best books yet, a comic-tragic enactment of the anxieties of the writing life, in which the early twentieth-century Sydney poet Christopher Brennan plays a major role. A legendary figure, with a commanding knowledge of classical and European poetry, Brennan wrote some of the most powerful poems in Australian literature. He died an impoverished alcoholic at the age of sixty-one. Castro's double portrait of the poet and his biographer, the writer-academic Brendan Costa, plays on the disappointment, the guilt, the lack of recognition, which troubles those who live by their imaginations. The novella is the perfect form for Castro's purpose, its compression heightening the wit and energy of his prose, and his remarkable feel for the embarrassments of character. *The Dark Wet* is the first collection of short stories by Jess Huon. Rich, lyrical and deeply felt, it explores the struggle towards a sense of self and belonging, expressed in three sequences of stories: that of Jed Harp, his lover Danny Hess, and his poet sister Alexandra; of Bell and Oliver, a couple moving between Melbourne and San Francisco; and of a young woman confronting religion and sex in a Christian community in India. Drawing on a rich range of settings, from the lush Top End of Australia, to the mountains of India, and vibrant urban centres, *The Dark Wet* is a brutally honest portrayal of lives grasping at fluidity and transgression, and the possibility of redemption and change. A delirious collection of short stories from the Latin American master of micro-fiction. A delirious collection of short stories from the Latin American master of microfiction, César Aira—the author of at least eighty novels, most of them barely one hundred pages long—*The Musical Brain & Other Stories* comprises twenty tales about oddballs, freaks, and loonies. Aira, with his *fuga hacia adelante* or "flight forward" into the unknown, gives us imponderables to ponder and bizarre and seemingly out-of-context plot lines, as well as thoughtful and passionate takes on everyday reality. The title story, first published in the *New Yorker*, is the *creme de la creme* of this exhilarating collection. Winner of the Man Booker Prize for Fiction 2011 Graham Hendrick, an historian, has left his wife Barbara for the vivacious Ann, and is more than pleased with his new life. Until, that is, the day he discovers Ann's celluloid past as a mediocre film actress. Soon Graham is pouncing on old clues, examining her books for inscriptions from past lovers, frequenting cinemas and poring over the bad movies she appeared in. It's not that he blames Anne for having a past before they met, but history has always mattered to him... Short fiction about a doctor who has a gift for making miracles and who is not deterred by his archenemy, Dr. Actyn, who is constantly trying to prove he is a charlatan. When Sister Consuelo calls on wealthy landowner Augusto Aixela for funds needed to start an Old People's Home, the two share an interlude of passion that alters their lives forever Depicts buildings from twenty-two ranches in Argentina. Follows the philosophical experiences of an enigmatic traveler on the border of Saxony and Prussia who is drawn into an intense debate about identity at the same time he pursues a relationship that challenges contemporary views about female sexuality. New in the *New Directions Pearls* series: an extremely rich mad scientist attempts to clone a leading genius in a bid to take over the world. César is a translator who's fallen on very hard times due to the global economic downturn; he is also an author, and a mad scientist hell-bent on world domination. On a visit to the beach he intuitively solves an ancient riddle, finds a pirate's treasure, and becomes a very wealthy man. Even so, César's bid for world domination comes first and so he attends a literary conference to be near the man whose clone he hopes will lead an army to victory: the world-renowned Mexican author, Carlos Fuentes. A comic science fiction fantasy of the first order, *The Literary Conference* is the perfect vehicle for César Aira's take over of literature in the 21st century. "A good story and first-rate social science."—*New York Times Book Review*. A sinisterly funny modern-day *Through the Looking Glass* that begins with cyanide poisoning and ends in strawberry ice cream. The idea of the Native American living in perfect harmony with nature is one of the most cherished contemporary myths. But how truthful is this larger-than-life image? According to anthropologist Shepard Krech, the first humans in North America demonstrated all of the intelligence, self-interest, flexibility, and ability to make mistakes of human beings anywhere. As Nicholas Lemann put it in *The New Yorker*, "Krech is more than just a conventional-wisdom overturner; he has a serious larger point to make. . . . Concepts like ecology, waste, preservation, and even the natural (as distinct from human) world are entirely anachronistic when applied to Indians in the days before the European settlement of North America." "Offers a more complex portrait of Native American peoples, one that rejects mythologies, even those that both European and Native Americans might wish to embrace."—*Washington Post* "My story, the story of 'how I became a nun,' began very early in my life; I had just turned six. The beginning is marked by a vivid memory, which I can reconstruct down to the last detail. Before, there is nothing, and after, everything is an extension of the same vivid memory, continuous and unbroken, including the intervals of sleep, up to the point where I took the veil ." So starts Cesar Aira's astounding "autobiographical" novel. Intense and perfect, this invented narrative of childhood experience bristles with dramatic humor at each stage of growing up: a first ice cream, school, reading, games, friendship. The novel begins in Aira's hometown, Coronel Pringles. As self-awareness grows, the story rushes forward in a torrent of anecdotes which transform a world of uneventful happiness into something else: the anecdote becomes adventure, and adventure, fable, and then legend. Between memory and oblivion, reality and fiction, Cesar Aira's *How I Became a Nun* retains childhood's main treasures: the reality of fable and the delirium of invention. A few days after his fiftieth birthday, Aira noticed the thin rim of the moon, visible despite the rising sun. When his wife explained the phenomenon to him he was shocked that for fifty years he had known nothing about "something so obvious, so visible." This epiphany led him to write *How I Became a Nun*. With a subtle and melancholic sense of humor he reflects on his failures, on the meaning of life and the importance of literature. *Birthday* is among the very best of Aira—it will surprise readers new to his work, and will deeply satisfy his many fans Before you know it you are no longer young, and by the way, while you were thinking about other things, the world was changing—and then, just as suddenly you realize that you are fifty years old. Aira had anticipated his fiftieth—a time when he would not so much recall years past as look forward to what lies ahead—but the birthday came and went without much ado. It was only months later, while having a somewhat banal conversation with his wife about the phases of the moon, that he realized how little he really knows about his life. In *Birthday* Aira searches for the events that were significant to him during his first fifty years. Between anecdotes ,and memories, the author ponders the origins of his personal truths, and meditates on literature meant as much for the writer as for the reader, on ignorance, knowledge, and death. Finally, *Birthday* is a little sad, in a serene, crystal-clear kind of way, which makes it even more irresistible. *New York Times* Bestselling and Goncourt Prize-Winning Author of *The Anomaly* Any man—or woman—who wants to hear nothing—or no more—about love should put this book down. Anna and Louise could be sisters, but they don't know each other. They are both married with children, and for the most part, they are happy. On almost the same day, Anna, a psychiatrist, crosses paths with Yves, a writer, while Louise, a lawyer, meets Anna's analyst, Thomas. Love at first sight is still possible for those into their forties and long-married. But when you have already mapped out a life path, a passionate affair can come at a high price. For our four characters, their lives are unexpectedly turned upside down by the deliciously inconvenient arrival of love. For Anna, meeting Yves has brought a flurry of excitement to her life and made her question her values, her reliable husband, and her responsibilities to her children. For Louise, a successful career woman in a stable and comfortable marriage, her routine is uprooted by the youthful passion she feels for Thomas. Thought-provoking, sophisticated, and, above all, amusing, *Enough About Love* captures the euphoria of desire through tender and unflinching portraits of husbands, wives, and lovers. When a Mapuche chief suddenly goes missing, a British naturalist is asked to find him in the vast Argentine pampas Clarke, a nineteenth-century English naturalist, roams the pampas in search of that most elusive and rare animal: the Legibrierian hare, whose defining quality seems to be its ability to fly. The local Indians, pointing skyward, report recent sightings of the hare but then ask Clarke to help them search for their missing chief as well. On further investigation Clarke finds more than meets the eye:in the Mapuche and Voroga languages every word has at least two meanings.Witty, very ironic, and with all the usual Airian digressive magic, *The Hare* offers subtle reflections on love, Victorian-era colonialism, and the many ambiguities of language. Juli'n R'os's latest comic extravaganza is at once a serious literary excavation and a lecture as delivered by Groucho Marx on the subject of that great (and often imposing) cornerstone of world literature: James Joyce's "Ulysses." Every book is born out of an earlier book (or books), and much as Joyce's novel unraveled Homer scene by scene, R'os's "The House of Ulysses" returns the favor, giving us the story of several bickering characters hoping to get to the bottom of Joyce's masterpiece (by force, if necessary), their conversation walking the line between a slapstick parody of the Joyce industry and a legitimate "guide for the perplexed." Focusing on each of Ulysses' characters, ideas, and references in turn, "The House of Ulysses" provides a playful, punning, ideal companion for the experienced Joycean and cautious Ulysses-procrastinator alike: one novel dreaming its way through another. When a local boy goes missing, his mother tracks a trucker on along-haul mission to the nethermost regions of Argentina where she discovers that the wind has fallen in love with her. Set in the precariously settled coastal town of Desperance, Carpentaria is the unforgettable portrait of the powerful Phantom family, leader of the Westend Pricklebush people, and its battles with old Joseph Midnight's renegade Eastend mob on the one hand, and the white officials of Uptown and the neighbouring Gurfurrit mine on the other. By turns operatic and surreal, Wright's stunning and richly imagined storytelling is a blend of myth and scripture, farce and politics. Her extraordinary characters - Elias Smith the outcast saviour, the religious

zealot Mozzie Fishman, the murderous mayor Stan Bruiser, the moth-ridden Captain Nicoli Finn, the activist and prodigal son Will Phantom, and above all, the rulers of the family, the queen of the rubbish-dump and the fish-embalming king of time, Angel Day and Normal Phantom - stride like giants in this storm-swept world. Ema The Captive, Cesar Aira's second novel, is perhaps closest in style to his popular *An Episode in the Life of a Landscape Painter* and *The Hare Simón Bolívar* is the preeminent symbol of Latin America and the subject of seemingly endless posthumous attention. Interpreted and reinterpreted in biographies, histories, political writings, speeches, and works of art and fiction, he has been a vehicle for public discourse for the past two centuries. Robert T. Conn follows the afterlives of Bolívar across the Americas, tracing his presence in a range of competing but interlocking national stories. How have historians, writers, statesmen, filmmakers, and institutions reworked his life and writings to make cultural and political claims? How has his legacy been interpreted in the countries whose territories he liberated, as well as in those where his importance is symbolic, such as the United States? In answering these questions, Conn illuminates the history of nation building and hemispheric globalism in the Americas. Darío Ezcurra is one of the thousands of Argentinians unlucky enough to be 'disappeared' by the military government--murdered by the local chief of police with the complicity of his friends and neighbours. Twenty years later, Fefe returns to the town where Darío met his fate and attempts to discover how the community let such a crime happen. Lies, excuses and evasion ensue--desperate attempts to deny the guilty secret of which the whole community, even Fefe himself, is afraid. A middle-class, directionless ox of a young man who helps the trash pickers of Buenos Aires's shantytown attracts the attention of a corrupt policeman who would use anyone including innocent kids to break a drug ring he believes is operating in the slum. By the author of *An Episode in the Life of a Landscape Painter*. Original. Michael's older brother dies at the beginning of the summer he turns 15, but as its title suggests *The Incredible Here and Now* is a tale of wonder, not of tragedy. Presented as a series of vignettes, in the tradition of Sandra Cisneros' Young Adult classic *The House on Mango Street*, it tells of Michael's coming of age in a year which brings him grief and romance; and of the place he lives in Western Sydney where 'those who don't know any better drive through the neighbourhood and lock their car doors', and those who do, flourish in its mix of cultures. Through his perceptions, the reader becomes familiar with Michael's community and its surroundings, the unsettled life of his family, the girl he meets at the local pool, the friends that gather in the McDonalds parking lot at night, the white Pontiac Trans Am that lights up his life like a magical talisman. *Artforum* is certainly one of César Aira's most charming, quirky, and funny books to date. Consisting of a series of interrelated stories about his compulsion to collect *Artforum* magazine, this is not about art so much as it is about passionate obsession. At first we follow our hapless collector from magazine shops to used bookstores hunting for copies of *Artforum*. A friend alerts him to a copy somewhere and he obsesses about actually going to get it--will the shop be open, will the copy already be sold? Finally he takes out a subscription, but then it never comes, so he hounds the mailman. There's the day his stash of *Artforums* gets rained on, but only one absorbs the water. And interspersed is a wacky chapter about the mystery of the broken clothespins. "How weird." "How crazy." "In *The Linden Tree*, the narrator, who could be Aira himself (born the same year, in the same place, a writer who is now also living in Buenos Aires) writes down his childhood memories" -- Pepe Carvalho, ex-cop, ex-marxist and constant gourmet, is hired to investigate the identity of a man pulled out of the sea with a tattoo that reads, "born to raise hell in hell". Unsettled during a retrospective of his early work, aging film director Yair Moses attempts to reconcile with the difficult but brilliant screenwriter from whom he is estranged, but the price that Trigano demands is one that will have strange and lasting consequences. 30,000 first printing. "Of my generation I most admire Daniel Sada, whose writing project seems to me the most daring." --Roberto Bolaño This Rabelaisian tale of lust and longing in the drier precincts of postwar Mexico introduces one of Latin America's most admired writers to the English-speaking world. Demetrio Sordo is an agronomist who passes his days in a dull but remunerative job at a ranch near Oaxaca. It is 1945, World War II has just ended, but those bloody events have had no impact on a country that is only on the cusp of industrializing. One day, more bored than usual, Demetrio visits a bordello in search of a libidinous solution to his malaise. There he begins an all-consuming and, all things considered, perfectly satisfying relationship with a prostitute named Mireya. A letter from his mother interrupts Demetrio's debauched idyll: she asks him to return home to northern Mexico to accompany her to a wedding in a small town on the edge of the desert. Much to his mother's delight, he meets the beautiful and virginal Renata and quickly falls in love--a most proper kind of love. Back in Oaxaca, Demetrio is torn, the poor cad. Naturally he tries to maintain both relationships, continuing to frolic with Mireya and beginning a chaste correspondence with Renata. But Mireya has problems of her own--boredom is not among them--and concocts a story that she hopes will help her escape from the bordello and compel Demetrio to marry her. Almost Never is a brilliant send-up of Latin American machismo that also evokes a Mexico on the verge of dramatic change. Was it a nightmare--the result of a bad case of indigestion--or did something truly scary happen after dinner in the Argentine town of Coronel Pringles? One Saturday night a bankrupt bachelor in his sixties and his mother dine with a wealthy friend. They discuss their endlessly connected neighbors. They talk about a mysterious pit that opened up one day, and the old bricklayer who sometimes walked to the cemetery to cheer himself up. Anxious to show off his valuable antiques, the host shows his guests old windup toys and takes them to admire an enormous doll. Back at home, the bachelor decides to watch some late night TV before retiring. The news quickly takes a turn for the worse as, horrified, the newscaster finds herself reporting about the dead rising from their graves, leaving the cemetery, and sucking the blood of the living--all somehow, disturbingly reminiscent of the dinner party. Lerena Dost is a dominant and successful woman until she and her psychoanalyst Suano Botilecue cross an ethical boundary and are disgraced, after their sexual relationship is made known. Both lose everything. Then, a chance encounter with a mysterious woman in an elevator plants a number in Lerena's mind, which she plays in the lottery and wins. She decides that she will not touch her new fortune until she can reward her benefactor, who turns out to be none other than Dona Munava, the famed leader of a spiritual cult hidden away in the countryside far from the city. Lerena and Suano set out on. An astounding novel from Argentina that is a meditation on the beautiful and the grotesque in nature, the art of landscape painting, and one experience in a man's life that became a lightning rod for inspiration. *An Episode in the Life of a Landscape Painter* is the story of a moment in the life of the German artist Johan Moritz Rugendas (1802-1858). Greatly admired as a master landscape painter, he was advised by Alexander von Humboldt to travel West from Europe to record the spectacular landscapes of Chile, Argentina, and Mexico. Rugendas did in fact become one of the best of the nineteenth-century European painters to venture into Latin America. However this is not a biography of Rugendas. This work of fiction weaves an almost surreal history around the secret objective behind Rugendas' trips to America: to visit Argentina in order to achieve in art the "physiognomic totality" of von Humboldt's scientific vision of the whole. Rugendas is convinced that only in the mysterious vastness of the immense plains will he find true inspiration. A brief and dramatic visit to Mendoza gives him the chance to fulfill his dream. From there he travels straight out onto the pampas, praying for that impossible moment, which would come only at an immense price--an almost monstrously exorbitant price that would ultimately challenge his drawing and force him to create a new way of making art. A strange episode that he could not avoid absorbing savagely into his own body interrupts the trip and irreversibly and explosively marks him for life. *Varamo* is the story of how, on an ordinary day in 1923, a middle-aged Panamanian public servant is paid his salary in counterfeit notes, and by the next morning has written a great avant-garde poem. Consumed by anxiety about how to dispose of the notes, *Varamo* ricochets from one encounter to another: with a chauffeur suspected of leading a black uprising and a madman demanding repayment of an imaginary debt, a paranoid mother and a comatose cabinet minister whose car has been overturned, two genteel golf-club-smuggling sisters, an obliging maid called 'the last woman' and three pirate publishers who finally push him to write 'that celebrated masterpiece of modern Central American poetry, *The Song of the Virgin Child*.' It is a comic vision of life, surreal and logical at the same time, with impossible complications leading to a triumphant resolution. The surprising, magnificent story of a Panamanian government employee who, one day, after a series of troubles, writes the celebrated masterwork of modern Central American poetry. Unmistakably the work of César Aira, *Varamo* is about the day in the life of a hapless government employee who, after wandering around all night after being paid by the Ministry in counterfeit money, eventually writes the most celebrated masterwork of modern Central American poetry, *The Song of the Virgin Boy*. What is odd is that, at fifty years old, *Varamo* "hadn't previously written one sole verse, nor had it ever occurred to him to write one." Among other things, this novella is an ironic allegory of the poet's vocation and inspiration, the subtlety of artistic genius, and our need to give literature an historic, national, psychological, and aesthetic context. But Aira goes further still -- converting the ironic allegory into a formidable parody of the expectations that all narrative texts generate -- by laying out the pathos of a man who between one night and the following morning is touched by genius. Once again Aira surprises us with his unclassifiable fiction: original and enjoyable, worthy of many a thoughtful chuckle, *Varamo* invites the reader to become an accomplice in the author's irresistible game. Brian Castro's award-winning novel, *The Garden Book*, is a meditation on loneliness, addiction and exploitation. Set in the years between the Depression and the Second World War in Australia's Dandenong Ranges, it follows the emotionally turbulent life of the beautiful Swan Hay (born Shuang He)--her marriage to the passionate yet brutal Darcy Damon, her love affair with the aviator Jasper Zenlin and her rise to literary fame overseas after her poetry is translated into French without her knowledge. Fifty years after her disappearance into institutions and a life of poverty and despair, Norman Shih--a rare-book librarian and "expert in self-effacement"--begins to piece together the life and losses of Swan. Tracking down clues from guesthouse libraries, antiquarian bookshops and Swan's own haunted writings, Shih fills out a portrait of early twentieth-century Australian lives wracked by modernist impulses of racial prejudice. "A mongrel dog named Freaky, the corpse of a man with a seemingly endless list of aliases, and a handful of tips from an anonymous woman caller. With these elements hard-nosed Inspector Petra Delicado and her sentimental sidekick, Fermin Garzon, begin an investigation into big-money dog smuggling. Their best leads come from the most unlikely sources: a ruggedly handsome vet; a blond bombshell who trains guard dogs; an eccentric university professor; and a haughty dog groomer. At times, these two world-wise detectives are at a loss, but Delicado and Garzon are not the sort of cops that rely on hunches. They methodically pursue their investigation, drawing the reader into a complex and sordid story in which passions and profits turn men into beasts and animals into victims. *Dog Day* is set in a Barcelona that few visitors to the city will ever see, a Barcelona that lurks beneath the surface of one of Europe's most dazzling cities. A broken heart, a new monstrosity, and another dead body accompany every step through this demimonde."--BOOK JACKET. A savagely funny, sexy crime adventure that is a biting satire on life in Mexico City. "Ghosts revolves around an immigrant worker's family squatting on the haunted construction site of a luxury condominium building. All of the workmen and their wives and children see the ghosts, who literally hang around the place, but one teenage girl becomes the most curious. Her questions about the ghosts get so intense that her mother in a chilling splitsecond realizes her daughter's life hangs in the balance *The Divorce* tells about a man who takes a vacation from Providence, R.I. in early December to avoid conflicts with his newly divorced wife and small daughter. He travels to Buenos Aires and there, one afternoon, he encounters

a series of the most magical coincidences. While sitting at an outdoor café, absorbed in conversation with a talented video artist, a young man with a bicycle is thoroughly drenched by a downpour of water seemingly from rain caught the night before in the overhead awning. The video artist knows the cyclist, who knew a mad hermetic sculptor, whose family used to take the Hindu God Krishna for walks in the neighborhood. More meetings, more whimsical and clever stories continue to weave reality with the absurd until the final, brilliant, wonderful, cataclysmic ending. Two completely different stories by the inimitable César Aira *The Little Buddhist Monk* is a story of Asian invention gone wild, as a diminutive Korean Buddhist monk acts as a tour guide to an increasingly distraught French couple on a working vacation in the Far East. *Proof* brings us quickly back to the West, where two punks, plus a new recruit (“Wannafuck?” is the opening line as the two punk lesbians accost the chubby and shy Marcia on a quiet street in Buenos Aires), take control of a local supermarket with dire consequences for the hostages. These two Aira works are as different as night and day. Nevertheless, sex, identity, and modern day economics figure deeply in both of these fast-paced, edgy fictions. A cerebral and wildly funny story revolving around the incongruity of a gold Rolex watch spotted on a lowly goatherd’s wrist *Daily conversations in outdoor cafés* with cultured friends can help make reality a little more real. Unfortunately, however, during one such conversation, one man spots a gold Rolex watch on a TV soap opera’s goatherd. This seemingly small absurdity sets off alarms: strange sensations of deception, distress, and incipient madness. The two men’s uneasiness soon becomes a nightmare as the TV adventure advances with a real-life plot — involving a mutant strain of killer algae — to take over the world! *The Conversations*, a reality within a fiction within a parallel reality, is hilariously funny and surprisingly touching.

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