in zanesville jo ann beard

In Zanesville - A Novel

From the acclaimed author of The Boys of My Youth and Festival Days, a “mesmerizing…beautifully written” debut novel that evokes the wrenching, exquisite moment just before we step into adulthood (Ann Patchett). The fourteen-year-old narrator of In Zanesville is a late bloomer. She flies under the radar — a sidekick, a marching-band dropout, a disastrous babysitter. Luckily, she has a best friend with whom she shares the everyday adventures of a 1970s American girlhood, incidents through which a world is revealed and character is forged. In time, the two girls’ friendship is tested — by their families’ claims on them, by a clique of popular girls who stumble upon them, and by their first startling, subversive intimations of womanhood. With dry wit and piercing observation, Jo Ann Beard shows us that in the seemingly quiet streets of America's innumerable Zanesvilles is a universe of wonders, and that within the souls of the awkward and the overlooked often burns something radiant. "Probably my favorite novel of the year...A marvelous reading experience...I don't think I'll ever forget the unnamed, perfectly realized narrator of In Zanesville." —Nancy Pearl, NPR

Festival Days

A searing and exhilarating new collection from the award-winning author of The Boys of My Youth and In Zanesville, who "honors the beautiful, the sacred, and the comic in life" (Sigrid Nunez, National Book Award-winner for The Friend) A New York Times Book Review Editors’ Choice When "The Fourth State of Matter," her now famous piece about a workplace massacre at the University of Iowa was published in The New Yorker, Jo Ann Beard immediately became one of the most influential writers in America, forging a path for a new generation of young authors willing to combine the dexterity of fiction with the rigors of memory and reportage, and in the process extending the range of possibility for the essay form. Now, with Festival Days, Beard brings us the culmination of her groundbreaking work. In these nine pieces, she captures both the small, luminous moments of daily existence and those instants when life and death hang in the balance, ranging from the death of a beloved dog to a relentlessly readable account of a New York artist trapped inside a burning building, as well as two triumphant, celebrated pieces of short fiction. Here is an unforgettable collection destined to be embraced and debated by readers and writers, teachers and students. Anchored by the title piece—a searing journey through India that brings into focus questions of mortality and love--Festival Days presents Beard at the height of her powers, using her flawless prose to reveal all that is tender and timeless beneath the way we live now.

The Boys of My Youth

The "utterly compelling, uncommonly beautiful" collection of personal essays (Newsweek) that established Jo Ann Beard as one of the leading writers of her generation. Cousins, mothers, sisters, dolls, dogs, best friends: these are the fixed points in Jo Ann Beard's universe, the constants that remain when the boys of her youth -- and then men who replace them -- are
gone. This widely praised collection of autobiographical essays summons back, with astonishing grace and power, moments of childhood epiphany as well as the cataclysms of adult life: betrayal, divorce, death. The Boys of My Youth heralded the arrival of an immensely gifted and influential writer and its essays remain surprising, original, and affecting today. "A luminous, funny, heartbreaking book of essays about life and its defining moments." --Harper's Bazaar

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**Sasha Masha**

Transgender author Agnes Borinsky deftly explores gender identity and queer romance in this heart-wrenching debut novel. Alex feels like he is in the wrong body. His skin feels strange against his bones. And then comes Tracy, who thinks he's adorably awkward, who wants to kiss him, who makes him feel like a Real Boy. But it is not quite enough. Something is missing. As Alex grapples with his identity, he finds himself trying on dresses and swiping on lipstick in the quiet of his bedroom. He meets Andre, a gay boy who is beautiful and unafraid to be who he is. Slowly, Alex begins to realize: maybe his name isn't Alex at all. Maybe it's Sasha Masha.

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**The Brittanys - A Novel**

"Bursting with bittersweet nostalgia, a funny, poignant, perfectly voiced debut that brilliantly captures what it's like to be a teenage girl. A VINTAGE ORIGINAL. They're not the most popular freshmen at their Florida prep school, but at least everyone knows their name(s). The Brittanys. Brittany Rosenberg: drives her golf cart around her subdivision to meet boys. Brittany Gottlieb: insists you can't lose your virginity if you haven't gotten your period. (She heard it somewhere!) Brittany Tomassi: is from New York. Brittany Jensen: once threw her tampon into a stranger's swimming pool. A brash, bold, unapologetic tomboy. And the greatest person in the whole wide world. At least as far as the fifth Brittany--our narrator--is concerned. Even within their friend group, she and Jensen are a duo: with their matching JanSport backpacks, Tiffany chokers, and Victoria's Secret push-up bras, they are unstoppable. And now that they're finally growing up, they're going to do everything: dye their hair, attend no-parent parties, try pot, kiss boys for real . . . maybe even lose their virginities. 2004 is totally going to be their year! But Jensen, it turns out, may not share quite the same outlook. And within our narrator's own family--in the lives of her exhausted mother and beloved, genius older brother--life-changing events may be taking shape. Events that only years later, looking back, she has the perspective to see"--

**Zanesville - A Novel**

WHO IS ELIJAH CLEARFATHER? Futuristic bioweapon or good old-fashioned messiah? Reincarnated ex-porn star or mutant information-age revolutionary? The man who awakens in New York City's Central Park with no memory of his identity and the enigmatic message FATHER FORGIVE THEM F carved into the flesh of his back may be all of these things and more. Taken in (and then expelled) by a group of freedom fighters battling the soul-deadening Vitessa Cultporation, Clearfather is a stranger in an even stranger land. Following tantalizing clues that point to the gnomic Stinky Wiggler, and pursued by murderous Vitessa agents, Clearfather embarks on a surreal odyssey of self-discovery across an America that resembles a vast amusement park designed by some unholy trinity of Walt Disney, Hunter S. Thompson, and Hieronymus Bosch. Accompanying Clearfather is an unforgettable cast of characters--including Aretha Nightingale, an ex-football-playing drag queen; Dooley Duck and Ubba Dubba, hologram cartoon characters sprung outrageously to life; and the ethereally beautiful Kokomo, whose past is as much a mystery as Clearfather's own. By turns hilarious and deeply moving, a savage, fiercely intelligent satire that is also a page-turning adventure and a transcendent love story, Zanesville marks the arrival of a brilliant new voice in fiction.

**The Book of Salt - A Novel**

A novel of Paris in the 1930s from the eyes of the Vietnamese cook employed by Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas, by the author of The Sweetest Fruits. Viewing his famous mesdames and their entourage from the kitchen of their rue de Fleurus home, Binh observes their domestic entanglements while seeking his own place in the world. In a mesmerizing tale of yearning and
betrayal, Monique Truong explores Paris from the salons of its artists to the dark nightlife of its outsiders and exiles. She takes us back to Binh's youthful servitude in Saigon under colonial rule, to his life as a galley hand at sea, to his brief, fateful encounters in Paris with Paul Robeson and the young Ho Chi Minh. Winner of the New York Public Library Young Lions Fiction Award A Best Book of the Year: New York Times, Village Voice, Seattle Times, Miami Herald, San Jose Mercury News, and others “An irresistible, scrupulously engineered confection that weaves together history, art, and human nature...a veritable feast.”—Los Angeles Times “A debut novel of pungent sensuousness and intricate, inspired imagination...a marvelous tale.”—Elle “Addictive...Deliciously written...Both eloquent and original.”—Entertainment Weekly “A mesmerizing narrative voice, an insider's view of a fabled literary household and the slow revelation of heartbreaking secrets contribute to the visceral impact of this first novel.”—Publishers Weekly, starred review

**The Girls - A Novel**

Meet Rose and Ruby: sisters, best friends, confidantes, and conjoined twins. Since their birth, Rose and Ruby Darlen have been known simply as "the girls." They make friends, fall in love, have jobs, love their parents, and follow their dreams. But the Darlens are special. Now nearing their 30th birthday, they are history's oldest craniopagus twins, joined at the head by as pot the size of a bread plate. When Rose, the bookish sister, sets out to write her autobiography, it inevitably becomes the story of her short but extraordinary life with Ruby, the beautiful one. From their awkward first steps -- Ruby's arm curled around Rose's neck, her foreshortened legs wrapped around Rose's hips -- to the friendships they gradually build for themselves in the small town of Leaford, this is the profoundly affecting chronicle of an incomparable life journey. As Rose and Ruby's story builds to an unforgettable conclusion, Lansens aims at the heart of human experience -- the hardship of loss and struggles for independence, and the fundamental joy of simply living a life. This is a breathtaking novel, one that no reader will soon forget, a heartrending story of love between sisters.