



sprawling, ambitious affair. It is also an epic masterpiece. At its beating heart is Ailey Pearl Garfield, a young African American woman who, after growing up and coming of age in Georgia, decides to trawl through her family's checkered history to learn what befell her ancestors in the Deep South. Multigenerational, multivoiced, and filled with darkness and light, this is a remarkable feat of storytelling.

'GREAT CIRCLE'

by Maggie Shipstead

Shipstead's immersive third novel braids together the life stories of two memorable women. "Born to be a wanderer," Marian Graves grows up to become a pioneering aviator but disappears in Antarctica in 1950 in an ill-fated attempt to circle the globe. In 2014, disgraced Hollywood star Hadley Baxter seeks to restore her dignity and revive her career by playing Marian in a movie. The book's scope, detail and single-minded heroines allow it to truly soar.

'KLARA AND THE SUN'

by Kazuo Ishiguro

Ishiguro's first novel since being awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature is narrated by an android — an "Artificial Friend." Klara draws nourishment from the sun and in turn provides strength and comfort for Josie, a teenager suffering from what could be a life-threatening illness. The more time Klara spends with her ailing companion, the more she learns about the frailty of life, the nature of love and what it takes to be human. Ishiguro's brave new world and the inhabitants within it cast a mesmerizing spell.

'OH WILLIAM!'

by Elizabeth Strout

Successful sixty-something writer Lucy Barton agrees to accompany her ex-husband William on a trip to Maine to meet the half-sister he never knew he had. But in doing so she ends up on a journey of discovery of her own, one that sees her reflecting on the highs and lows (or "Difficulties") of her decades-long relationship,

together with the current state of her life. Strout's third outing for her much-loved creation is a bittersweet delight.

'THE COMMITTED'

by Viet Thanh Nguyen

Starting where his Pulitzer Prize-winning debut "The Sympathizer" left off, Nguyen's sequel follows his unnamed double agent — "a man of two faces" — out of Vietnam and into Paris in 1981. There he deals drugs and settles scores for Chinese gangsters, loses himself in philosophical debates with his "aunt" and other intellectuals, and communes with ghosts from his past — all while dreading an impending showdown with his former han-

dlar, Man. An existential thriller packed with mayhem, absurdity and big ideas.

'A LINE TO KILL'

by Anthony Horowitz

Ex-Detective Inspector Daniel Hawthorne and his sidekick, writer Anthony Horowitz, return for a third case, this time on the tiny island of Alderney in the English Channel — a place where there has never been a murder. That track record is ruined when the wealthy sponsor of a literary festival there meets a violent end. Soon the crime-solving duo are unearthing clues and sifting secrets and grudges of the islanders and the visiting authors. Funny, fiendish and thrilling, this mystery proves

that Horowitz is king of the contemporary whodunit.

'CROSSROADS'

by Jonathan Franzen

The first volume in a proposed trilogy, "Crossroads" is one of those books Franzen is so good at: an involving and enthralling family saga. This one revolves around the Hildebrandts in small-town Illinois in the early 1970s. Pastor Russ and his unhappy wife, Marion, harbor secret desires, hidden agendas and unprocessed pain in their disintegrating marriage. Meanwhile, their children take drastic steps to go their own way. The flawed characters and high-stakes plotlines make for superlative drama. Roll on the next installment.