Read an essay by Chang-rae Lee here. The bestselling, award-winning writer of Native Speaker, Aloft, and My Year Abroad returns with his biggest, most ambitious novel yet: a spellbinding story of how love and war echo through an entire lifetime. With his three critically acclaimed novels, Chang-rae Lee has established himself as one of the most talented writers of contemporary literary fiction. Now, with The Surrendered, Lee has created a book that amplifies everything we’ve seen in his previous works, and reads like nothing else. It is a brilliant, haunting, heartbreaking story about how love and war inalterably change the lives of those they touch. June Han was only a girl when the Korean War left her orphaned; Hector Brennan was a young GI who fled the petty tragedies of his small town to serve his country. When the war ended, their lives collided at a Korean orphanage where they vied for the attentions of Sylvie Tanner, the beautiful yet deeply damaged missionary wife whose elusive love seemed to transform everything. Thirty years later and on the other side of the world, June and Hector are reunited in a plot that will force them to come to terms with the mysterious secrets of their past, and the shocking acts of love and violence that bind them together. As Lee masterfully unfurls the stunning story of June, Hector, and Sylvie, he weaves a profound meditation on the nature of heroism and sacrifice, the power of love, and the possibilities for mercy, salvation, and surrendering oneself to another. Combining the complex themes of identity and belonging of Native Speaker and A Gesture Life with the broad range, energy, and pure storytelling gifts of Aloft, Chang-rae Lee has delivered his most ambitious, exciting, and unforgettable work yet. It is a mesmerizing novel, elegantly suspenseful and deeply affecting.

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**My Year Abroad - A Novel**

INSTANT NATIONAL BESTSELLER “A manifesto to happiness—the one found when you stop running from who you are.” —New York Times Book Review “An extraordinary book, acrobatic on the level of the sentence, symphonic across its many movements—and this is a book that moves…My Year Abroad is a wild ride—a caper, a romance, a bildungsroman, and something of a satire of how to get filthy rich in rising Asia.” — Vogue From the award-winning author of Native Speaker and On Such a Full Sea, an exuberant, provocative story about a young American life transformed by an unusual Asian adventure – and about the human capacities for pleasure, pain, and connection. Tiller is an average American college student with a good heart but minimal aspirations. Pong Lou is a larger-than-life, wildly creative Chinese American entrepreneur who sees something intriguing in Tiller beyond his bored exterior and takes him under his wing. When Pong brings him along on a boisterous trip across Asia, Tiller is catapulted from ordinary young man to talented protégé, and pulled into a series of ever more extreme and eye-opening experiences that transform his view of the world, of Pong, and of himself. In the breathtaking, “precise, elliptical prose” that Chang-rae Lee is known for (The New York Times), the narrative alternates between Tiller’s outlandish, mind-boggling year with Pong and the strange, riveting, emotionally complex domestic life that follows it, as Tiller processes what happened to him abroad and what it means for his future. Rich with commentary on Western attitudes, Eastern stereotypes, capitalism, global trade, mental health, parenthood, mentorship, and more, My Year Abroad is also an exploration of the surprising effects of cultural immersion—on a young American in Asia, on a Chinese man in America, and on an unlikely couple hiding out in the suburbs. Tinged at once with humor and darkness, electric with its accumulating surprises and suspense, My Year Abroad is a novel that only Chang-rae Lee could have written, and one that will be read and discussed for years to come.

**On Such a Full Sea - A Novel**

“Watching a talented writer take a risk is one of the pleasures of devoted reading, and On Such a Full Sea provides all that and more. . . . With On Such a Full Sea, [Chang-rae Lee] has found a new way to explore his old preoccupation: the oft-told tale of the desperate, betraying, lonely human heart.” —Andrew Sean Greer, The New York Times Book Review “I’ve never been a fan of grand hyperbolic declarations in book reviews, but faced with On Such a Full Sea, I have no choice but to ask: Who is a greater novelist than Chang-rae Lee today?” —Porochista Khakpour, The Los Angeles Times From the beloved award-winning author of Native Speaker, The Surrendered, and My Year Abroad, a highly provocative, deeply affecting story of one woman’s legendary quest in a shocking, future America. On Such a Full Sea takes Chang-rae Lee’s elegance of prose, his masterly storytelling, and his long-standing interests in identity, culture, work, and love, and lifts them to a new plane. Stepping from the realistic and historical territories of his previous work, Lee brings us into a world created from scratch. Against a vividly imagined
future America, Lee tells a stunning, surprising, and riveting story that will change the way readers think about the world they live in. In a future, long-declining America, society is strictly stratified by class. Long-abandoned urban neighborhoods have been repurposed as highwalled, self-contained labor colonies. And the members of the labor class—descendants of those brought over en masse many years earlier from environmentally ruined provincial China—find purpose and identity in their work to provide pristine produce and fish to the small, elite, satellite charter villages that ring the labor settlement. In this world lives Fan, a female fish-tank diver, who leaves her home in the B-Mor settlement (once known as Baltimore), when the man she loves mysteriously disappears. Fan’s journey to find him takes her out of the safety of B-Mor, through the anarchic Open Counties, where crime is rampant with scant governmental oversight, and to a faraway charter village, in a quest that will soon become legend to those she left behind.

Aloft

The New York Times–bestselling novel by the critically acclaimed author of Native Speaker, A Gesture Life and My Year Abroad. At 59, Jerry Battle is coasting through life. His favorite pastime is flying his small plane high above Long Island. Aloft, he can escape from the troubles that plague his family, neighbors, and loved ones on the ground. But he can't stay in the air forever. Only months before his 60th birthday, a culmination of family crises finally pull Jerry down from his emotionally distant course. Jerry learns that his family's stability is in jeopardy. His father, Hank, is growing increasingly unhappy in his assisted living facility. His son, Jack, has taken over the family landscaping business but is running it into bankruptcy. His daughter, Theresa, has become pregnant and has been diagnosed with cancer. His longtime girlfriend, Rita, who helped raise his children, has now moved in with another man. And Jerry still has unanswered questions that he must face regarding the circumstances surrounding the death of his late wife. Since the day his wife died, Jerry has turned avoiding conflict into an art form—the perfect expression being his solitary flights from which he can look down on a world that appears serene and unscathed. From his comfortable distance, he can't see the messy details, let alone begin to confront them. But Jerry is learning that in avoiding conflict, he is also avoiding contact with the people he loves most.

Native Speaker

The debut novel from critically-acclaimed and New York Times–bestselling author of On Such a Full Sea and My Year Abroad. In Native Speaker, author Chang-rae Lee introduces readers to Henry Park. Park has spent his entire life trying to become a true American—a native speaker. But even as the essence of his adopted country continues to elude him, his Korean heritage seems to drift further and further away. Park's harsh Korean upbringing has taught him to hide his emotions, to remember everything he learns, and most of all to feel an overwhelming sense of alienation. In other words, it has shaped him as a natural spy. But the very attributes that help him to excel in his profession put a strain on his marriage to his American wife and stand in the way of his coming to terms with his young son's death. When he is assigned to spy on a rising Korean-American politician, his very identity is tested, and he must figure out who he is amid not only the conflicts within himself but also within the ethnic and political tensions of the New York
City streets. Native Speaker is a story of cultural alienation. It is about fathers and sons, about the desire to connect with the world rather than stand apart from it, about loyalty and betrayal, about the alien in all of us and who we finally are.

**A Gesture Life - A Novel**

The second novel from the critically acclaimed New York Times–bestselling author Chang-rae Lee. His remarkable debut novel was called "rapturous" (The New York Times Book Review), "revelatory" (Vogue), and "wholly innovative" (Kirkus Reviews). It was the recipient of six major awards, including the prestigious Hemingway Foundation/PEN award. Now Chang-rae Lee has written a powerful and beautifully crafted second novel that leaves no doubt about the extraordinary depth and range of his talent. A Gesture Life is the story of a proper man, an upstanding citizen who has come to epitomize the decorous values of his New York suburban town. Courteous, honest, hardworking, and impenetrable, Franklin Hata, a Japanese man of Korean birth, is careful never to overstep his boundaries and to make his neighbors comfortable in his presence. Yet as his story unfolds, precipitated by the small events surrounding him, we see his life begin to unravel. Gradually we learn the mystery that has shaped the core of his being: his terrible, forbidden love for a young Korean Comfort Woman when he served as a medic in the Japanese army during World War II. In A Gesture Life, Chang-rae Lee leads us with dazzling control through a taut, suspenseful story about love, family, and community—and the secrets we harbor. As in Native Speaker, he writes of the ways outsiders conform in order to survive and the price they pay for doing so. It is a haunting, breathtaking display of talent by an acclaimed young author.

**Understanding Chang-rae Lee**

In Understanding Chang-rae Lee, Amanda M. Page provides the first critical survey of the work of one of America's most acclaimed contemporary novelists. Chang-rae Lee, the Ward W. and Priscilla B. Woods Professor of English at Stanford University, has been the recipient of numerous awards including a Hemingway Foundation/PEN Award, an American Book Award, and the Dayton Literary Peace Prize. Lee is the author of five novels, including The Surrendered, which was a named a Pulitzer Prize finalist in 2011. In considering the novelist's oeuvre, Page examines Lee's evolving use of narrative perspective and how it attests to the power of voice by showing that storytelling can reveal hidden truths—whether intended or not. After a brief biography, an overview of Lee's critical reception, and a discussion of his nonfiction essays, Page traces the trajectory of Lee's career to illustrate the ways his work continues to push against formal and thematic boundaries with each new novel. In her exploration of Lee's first and best-known novel, Native Speaker, Page introduces many of Lee's recurring themes, including the pains of cultural assimilation, the significant role of language in identity, and emotional alienation as a result of constructs of masculinity. Page then argues that Lee's second novel, A Gesture Life, uses evasive narration and the guise of a suburban novel to conceal a meditation on war trauma and contemporary isolation. Aloft, the last of Lee's novels told in the first person, plays with expected conventions of American suburban fiction to critique the white privilege at the heart of this familiar form. Page also explores The Surrendered, Lee's ambitious historical epic that deploys third-person perspective to show the variety of ways
historical trauma reverberates in the present. Page's final chapter focuses on Lee's dystopian novel *On Such a Full Sea*. In his most bold experiment with narrative voice to date, this novel is told from the collective perspective of an entire community, reflecting on the experiences of a lone girl as she navigates a highly stratified social hierarchy. Page argues that this work shows the culmination of Lee's interest in the relationship between the individual and the community and the power of a single voice to speak truth.

**Major Pettigrew's Last Stand**

Major Ernest Pettigrew is perfectly content to lead a quiet life in the sleepy village of Edgecombe St Mary, away from the meddling of the locals and his overbearing son. But when his brother dies, the Major finds himself seeking companionship with the village shopkeeper, Mrs Ali. Drawn together by a love of books and the loss of their partners, they are soon forced to contend with irate relatives and gossiping villagers. The perfect gentleman, but the most unlikely hero, the Major must ask himself what matters most: family obligation, tradition or love? Funny, comforting and heart-warming, Major Pettigrew's Last Stand proves that sometimes, against all odds, life does give you a second chance.

**50 New (or Newly Relevant) Books Worth Gifting This Year**

Remember when you were a kid and you'd feel around the edges of your wrapped presents, dreading the telltale outline of a spine and pages? Well, you're older and wiser now, and with age comes ...

**Capitol riot arrests: See who's been charged across the U.S.**

A tipster told the FBI that Chang posted on Facebook that he had participated ... demonstrating or picketing in a Capitol building. Lee posted photos on her Facebook account of her experience ...

**Minah Lee**

I wanted to write a letter to ‘us and them’ who had been displaced by being asked to surrender our freedom of speech ... In her performance, Lee told us that the leaves she stood on were cedar ...

**Movie Reviews**

The Spanish director finally confronts the legacy of his country’s political violence in his new film, starring Penélope Cruz and Milena Smit. By A.O. Scott Tilda Swinton stars in Apichatpong ...