



BEL CANTO BOOKS  
read. think. sing.

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New Year, New Books, and  
A Wrench in our Bookish  
Plans!

February/March 2019

Greetings!

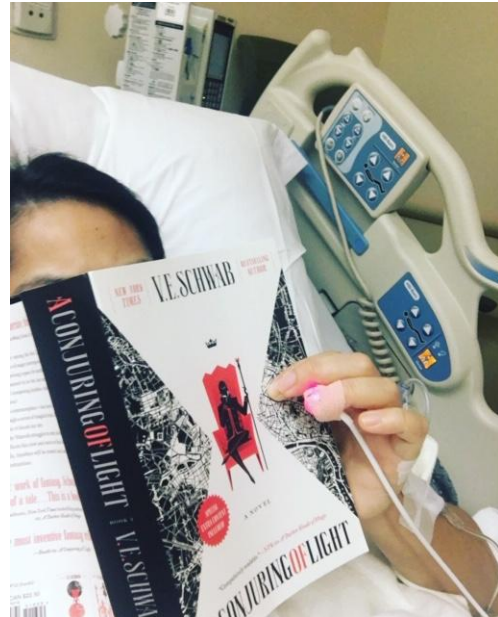
Well, I don't know about you, but it's already been quite a year at Bel Canto Books HQ. This was to be our true kickoff year, when we threw off the reins of corporate America and really dove in to see if this bookstore dream could become a real thing.

The universe (and my lady parts) had other plans. After a flurry of doctors' consultations, lab work, and a two-night stint at Long Beach Memorial, yours truly is happily on the mend. (Email me if you wanna swap fibroids stories - who knew this was such a rampant problem for us ladies?)

We should be back in the saddle (har har!) by April, so for now, we bring you bedside reading recommendations, bookish news and our own hospital-stay-tested travel essentials list.

Happy Reading!

Jhoanna  
A vowed Booknerd & Owner/Manager  
Bel Canto Books  
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Finishing V.E. Schwab's excellent *A Darker Shade of Magic* at Long Beach Memorial Hospital - even one of my doctors is into it!

## February Reading Recap

52 Books in 52 Weeks:  
Week 9

When you're laid up in bed for the majority of your day, it turns out you can get to a lot of reading done (with some Netflixing on the side).

We read some exceptional books this February, a big chunk of which were in celebration of Black History Month.



Here's the breakdown:

- *A Gathering of Shadows* and *A Conjuring of Light* by V.E. Schwab
- *Maid* by Stephanie Land (audiobook)
- *Washington Black* by Esi Edugyan
- *Born a Crime* by Trevor Noah
- *Heavy* by Kiese Laymon
- *An Illustrated Life* edited by Danny Gregory
- *How Long 'Til Black Future Month?* by N.K. Jemisin

If you can only read one book of the bunch, I urge you to pick up Kiese Laymon's *Heavy: An American Memoir*. Beautifully written, with plenty of humor to break up the gut-wrenching self-reflection, Laymon writes with unflinching honesty and true love for his subjects. He'll be honored with the Christopher Isherwood Prize for Autobiographical Prose from the LA Times Book Prizes, truly well-deserved!

[Shop our Online Bookstore for these picks and more!](#)

## AWP 2019 Comes West!

### Booknerds & Writers Unite!

If you live in the Portland, OR area or are looking for the most magical booknerd weekend ever, come join us at AWP 2019!

This annual conference for writers and readers is our favorite literary event of the year, bringing together our favorite poets and writers for amazing author talks and readings, along with great educational panels, for a long weekend of booknerd goodness.



I first heard poet Ross Gay read at AWP last year, and he is joy personified! Check out the video of him reading of "Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude" at [Split This Rock](#).



Since we'll be in Portland this year, we'll also visit as many bookstores as possible given the packed conference schedule, including Powell's, Broadway Books, Black Hat Books and Annie Bloom's Books. Let us know if you have any Portland indie bookstore faves!

2019 Featured Presenters include Colson Whitehead, Jesmyn Ward, Tayari Jones and Cheryl Strayed. And of course, Ross Gay. Wow. Just Wow.

## Travel Essentials

### One Bag Travel, Hospital Edition

We're huge fans of One Bag Travel, rarely ever checking a bag, even when flying overseas. We're just weird and neurotic like that (who needs to deal with lost bags on your vacation?!?).

After consulting with family and friends who've spend a night or two in the hospital, we put together our Book-a-licious Overnight bag:

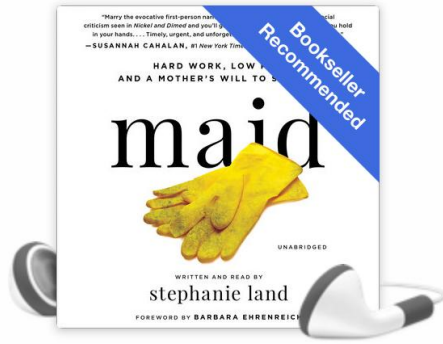


- Comfy cardigan and colorful shawl for drafty hospital rooms
- Fun non-slip socks (slipping and falling while trying to get to the bathroom would be the worst)
- Cute going home outfit, preferably a zip-up muumuu and slip-on shoes (you won't want to fuss with elastic waistbands and shoelaces)
- Colorful pencil bag with iPod and earphones, battery pack, hair ties and hair brush, toothbrush and toothpaste, tissues, eye mask, lotion, and lip balm (we strongly believe in being over-prepared)
- Leakproof water bottle (you can't trust that they'll refill your water on the regular)
- A great book or two, plus pen and journal (duh!)
- A memorable tote bag, like the "I Love Good Books" tote bag from Baker & Taylor, our awesome book wholesaler

Armed with these goodies, we had a comfortable (at least as best as

can be expected given the circumstances) couple of days with the good women and men of Long Beach Memorial.

Onward to Spring and warmer, sunnier days! XOXO Jho



*Maid* by Stephanie Land - our Libro.fm February Audiobook Pick!

Bel Canto Books is a Long Beach-based bookstore startup, hosting monthly pop-up events throughout Long Beach and our neighboring communities.

Find us at:



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