

MORE FAMILY FICTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Hi! Thank you for loving and supporting *A Very Typical Family*. If you liked the sibling dynamics between Natalie, Lynn, and Jake, here are some more recommendations for great sibling and family drama!

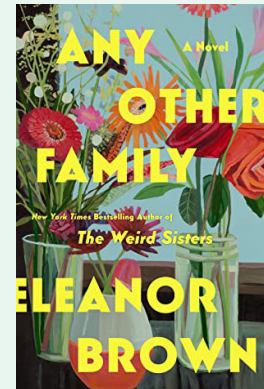
-Sierra

Any Other Family

by Eleanor Brown

What it's about: They look just like any other family. But they aren't a family like any other – not quite. Instead, they are three sets of parents who adopted four biological siblings, committing to keeping the children connected after the death of their grandmother.

My thoughts: This is a lovely story about family and how we choose to make it. Brown is an adoptive parent and writes with compassion on the subject, not shying away from some of the challenges adoptive parents go through, such as questioning one's own abilities as a parent. Each mother in the story (3 of them) were asked to transform their thinking about themselves, and ultimately how they viewed themselves as parents. A lovely story with a dynamic, engaging family.

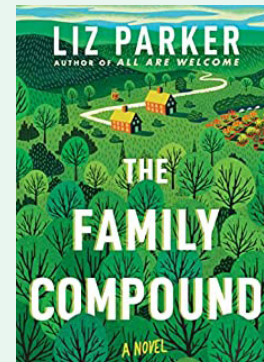


The Family Compound

by Liz Parker

What it's about: Five cousins must band together to decide the future of their shared inheritance—the family's sprawling property in Stowe, Vermont—but with each at a different place in life, reaching a unanimous decision seems unlikely.

My thoughts: If you like messy families (well, you know I do!), this is a fun read. It's about 5 cousins who have inherited a large plot of land and need to get their crap together to see if they can afford to keep it. At times heartbreaking, this story starts out with a death but is ultimately about life lived. I didn't see the end coming!

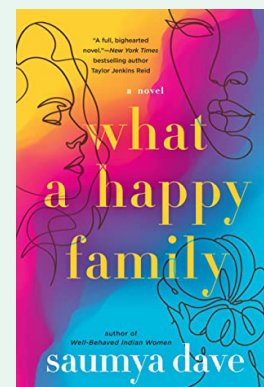


What a Happy Family

by Saumya Dave

What it's about: From the outside, the Joshi family is the quintessential Indian-American family. Decades ago, Bina and Deepak immigrated to America, where she became a pillar of their local Indian community and he, a successful psychiatrist. Their eldest daughter, Suhani, is following the footsteps of her father's career and happily married. Natasha, their middle daughter, is about to become engaged to the son of longtime family friends. And Anuj, their son—well he's a son and what could be better than that?

My thoughts: I loved this portrait of an Indian American family. They struggle with the concept of who we are in our family and how that affects our adult lives. Each sibling and the parents are all grappling with their own challenges, and of course they handle them better together rather than apart.



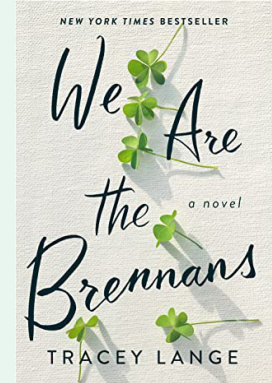
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We Are the Brennans

by Tracey Lange

What it's about: When twenty-nine-year-old Sunday Brennan wakes up in a Los Angeles hospital, bruised and battered after a drunk driving accident she caused, she swallows her pride and goes home to her family in New York. But it's not easy. She deserted them all--and her high school sweetheart--five years before with little explanation, and they've got questions.

My thoughts: The Brennans are a messed up Irish family with some serious skeletons in their closet. I was very invested in their story and their healing. Their choices were poor, and then poorer, but they way they flail and ultimately come together makes this a perfect family story.



The Most Fun We Ever Had

by Claire Lombardo

What it's about: A multigenerational novel in which the four adult daughters of a Chicago couple--still madly in love after forty years--recklessly ignite old rivalries until a long-buried secret threatens to shatter the lives they've built.

My thoughts: A long novel, but one that shows the rivalries and adult relationships of siblings beautifully--along with the foibles of the parents, which in my opinion always have a huge affect on how their kids turn out.

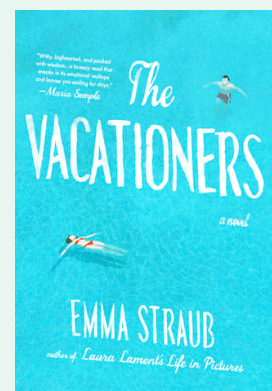


The Vacationers

by Emma Straub

What it's about: For the Posts, a two-week trip to the Balearic island of Mallorca with their extended family and friends is a celebration: Franny and Jim are observing their thirty-fifth wedding anniversary, and their daughter, Sylvia, has graduated from high school. The sunlit island, its mountains and beaches, its tapas and tennis courts, also promise an escape from the tensions simmering at home in Manhattan. But all does not go according to plan: over the course of the vacation, secrets come to light, old and new humiliations are experienced, childhood rivalries resurface, and ancient wounds are exacerbated.

My thoughts: This is a hugely enjoyable story of a family who deals with separate awakenings. It's such a good nuclear family story and of course the setting of Mallorca is fantastic. The pressures of home and life all come bubbling to the surface here, and lessons are learned. It's a great read.



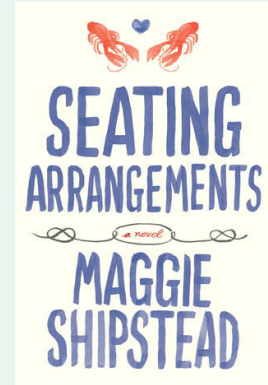
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Seating Arrangements

by Maggie Shipstead

What it's about: Winn Van Meter is heading for his family's retreat on the pristine New England island of Waskeke. Normally a haven of calm, for the next three days this sanctuary will be overrun by tipsy revelers as Winn prepares for the marriage of his daughter Daphne to the affable young scion Greyson Duff. Winn's wife, Bidy, has planned the wedding with military precision, but arrangements are sideswept by a storm of salacious misbehavior and intractable lust: Daphne's sister, Livia, who has recently had her heart broken by Teddy Fenn, the son of her father's oldest rival, is an eager target for the seductive wiles of Greyson's best man; Winn, instead of reveling in his patriarchal duties, is tormented by his long-standing crush on Daphne's beguiling bridesmaid Agatha; and the bride and groom find themselves presiding over a spectacle of misplaced desire, marital infidelity, and monumental loss of faith in the rituals of American life.

My thoughts: One of my favorite novels even though there is a supremely unlikeable main character (Winn). He tries to redeem himself and watching it in such well-written words is great; the genius of this story is his arc. Plus, there's a dead whale (those of you who have read *A Very Typical Family* will know recognize the dead sea mammals).

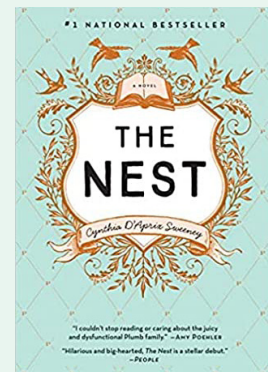


The Nest

by Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney

What it's about: On a wintry afternoon in New York City, Melody, Beatrice and Jack Plumb gather to confront their charismatic and reckless older brother, Leo, who has just been released from rehab. Leo's bad behaviour, culminating in a car crash while under the influence—a nineteen-year-old waitress beside him—has endangered the Plumbs' joint trust fund, or "the Nest," as they've taken to calling it. The four siblings are at very different places in their lives, but all believe that this money will solve a host of self-inflicted problems and their consequences. And until Leo's accident, they'd been mere months away from receiving it.

My thoughts: I loved D'Aprix Sweeney's book *GOOD COMPANY* as well--that almost made it on this list as well, but I gave way to *The Nest* for being such a good sibling story. *THE NEST* is a great example of the ties siblings have despite how they may feel about each other's adult behavior.



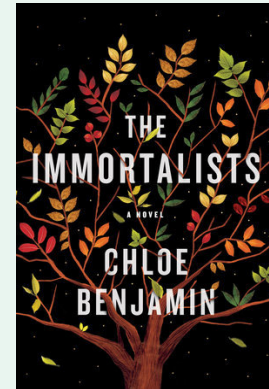
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The Immortalists

by Chloe Benjamin

What it's about: It's 1969 in New York City's Lower East Side, and word has spread of the arrival of a mystical woman, a traveling psychic who claims to be able to tell anyone the day they will die. The Gold children—four adolescents on the cusp of self-awareness—sneak out to hear their fortunes. The prophecies inform their next five decades. Golden-boy Simon escapes to the West Coast, searching for love in '80s San Francisco; dreamy Klara becomes a Las Vegas magician, obsessed with blurring reality and fantasy; eldest son Daniel seeks security as an army doctor post-9/11; and bookish Varya throws herself into longevity research, where she tests the boundary between science and immortality.

My thoughts: The concept of this novel is incredible--four siblings all know when they will die. What they do with that information and how they ebb and flow with each other over their lives is the story, and it's an inventive, excellent one. Benjamin is such a good writer and her words are gorgeous.

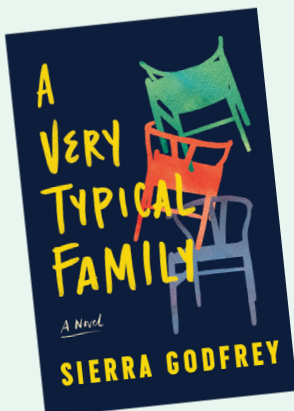
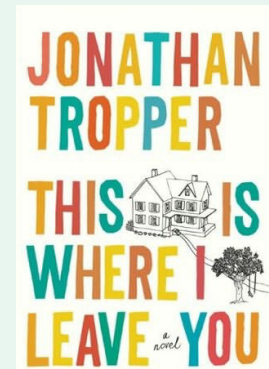


This Is Where I Leave You

by Jonathan Tropper

What it's about: The death of Judd Foxman's father marks the first time that the entire Foxman clan has congregated in years. There is, however, one conspicuous absence: Judd's wife, Jen, whose affair with his radio- shock-jock boss has recently become painfully public. Simultaneously mourning the demise of his father and his marriage, Judd joins his dysfunctional family as they reluctantly sit shiva and spend seven days and nights under the same roof. The week quickly spins out of control as longstanding grudges resurface, secrets are revealed and old passions are reawakened. Then Jen delivers the clincher: she's pregnant...

My thoughts: This novel is somewhat polarizing. I know some readers don't love the main character, but I did! It's a hilarious story, and I could not believe the nonsense these siblings all get up to, including Judd. What an incredible mess of a family! Highly recommend.



WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE FAMILY DRAMA?
LET ME KNOW AT SIERRA@SIERRAGODFREY.COM
VISIT ME AT SIERRAGODFREY.COM