winter
spring
2024
MISSION
Restless Books is an independent, nonprofit publisher devoted to championing essential voices from around the world whose stories speak to us across linguistic and cultural borders.

Through cultural programming, we aim to celebrate immigrant writing and bring literature to underserved communities. We believe that immigrant stories are a vital component of our cultural consciousness; they help to ensure awareness of our communities, build empathy for our neighbors, and strengthen our democracy.

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As an independent nonprofit publisher, Restless Books relies on our readers’ and partners’ generosity to continue our work. Your support enables us to discover and promote extraordinary authors from around the world, to champion perspectives that defy the familiar, and to take risks in our editorial choices, choosing to highlight works of global and literary value over market trends.

Restless Books gratefully acknowledges the support of the following organizations for our 2023-2024 titles:

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† In memoriam.
Letter from the Publisher

I am writing to you from our new beautiful office and storefront in Amherst, Mass, located on 69 Main Street, just a few steps away from the Emily Dickinson Homestead. Over the last several decades, the space we now occupy was a barbershop and before that, a student laundry. I imagine customers in both enjoying an abundance of stories, at once intimate and significant, while getting a haircut or washing their clothes. It seems fitting to me that our books are now continuing those important conversations. Over the past year, the world seems to have been turned upside down. Ravaging wars in Ukraine and the Middle East have brought enormous suffering and resurfaced ancient hatreds. The need for translation feels urgent. Restless Books has always been about expanding the diet of English-language readers with stories originating in distant places, geographically and metaphorically.

One example is our children’s book Daniel and Ismail, about the unlikely friendship between two boys, one Palestinian and one Jewish. This book was written in Spanish in Chile, which has the largest Palestinian community outside of the Arab world. We published it in 2019 trilingually: English, Hebrew, and Arabic. It has recently touched a chord. The New York Times recently described it as a prime example of how “children’s literature fosters more than just basic awareness of the similarities and differences in our shared humanity: It conjures a realm where we can imagine — together — something better than what is.”

Our next season is full of similar jewels. April will bring Kuwaiti author Bothayna Al-Essa’s The Book Censor’s Library, translated from the Arabic by Ranya Abdelrahman and Sawad Hussain. At a time when book banning is unfortunately pushing us back to a period around the Second World War II, the novel is a plea for open debate. Its satire of censorship, secret archives, and the looming eye of an all-powerful government is reminiscent of canonical literature about liberty and free speech, including 1984, Darkness at Noon, The Handmaid’s Tale, and Fahrenheit 451. Remember: censorship isn’t only about banning books, a strategy unfortunately we are all familiar with; it is also about being apathetic toward the act and art of reading.

Tenderloin, Joy Sorman’s macabre but entrancing novel of an obsessive French butcher also hits shelves (and guts) in April. This gorgeous, stomach-churning tale probes the thin borders between human, animal, flesh, and meat. It won the 2013 François Mauriac prize, and we are very pleased to bring it to English-speaking readers.

The winning novel of our 2022 Prize for New Immigrant Writing is a gripping and poignant tale of power, identity, and unconditional, unconventional love. Between This World and the Next by Praveen Herat follows a British war photographer and a young Cambodian woman whose lives become entangled as they seek to intervene in a web of sex-trafficking and arms deals, drawing them deeper into a world of crime, corruption, and difficult truths. I have no doubt you will find this narrative a refreshing new take on immigrant writing.

A new translation of the Batchelder Award–winning classic The Wildcat Behind Glass rounds out our season. This story of two sisters coming of age during the onset of fascism in Greece is beloved worldwide. It reflects the life of its author, Aliki Zei, an outspoken supporter of democracy who was forced into political exile for her views. Karen Emmerich’s translation, the first in over fifty years, brings the timeless tale to a new generation of readers.

Our monthly online series “Rereading the Classics,” in partnership with the New York Public Library and the Jones Library in Amherst, has been going strong since 2017. We have recently discussed One Thousand and One Nights, Dracula, Toni Morrison, Jorge Luis Borges, and Elizabeth Bishop. Likewise, our in-person and online workshops for emerging immigrant writers have allowed many people new to this country to find their voices and share their stories.

Become a Restless reader by submerging yourself into these stories and about 250 others that we have published since 2013. Join our Restless Readers’ Club and receive a new book in the mail every other month. You can also help us continue our mission. Donate at https://restlessbooks.org/donate/ or scan the QR code attached.

Un placer,
Ilan Stavans

Winter/Spring 2024
**The Maroons**
Louis Timagène Houat
Translated from the French by Aqil Gopee with Jeffrey Diteman

A rediscovered classic now available in English for the first time, *The Maroons* is a fervid account of slavery and escape on nineteenth-century Réunion Island.

Frême is a young African man forced into slavery on Réunion, an island east of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean. Plagued by memories of his childhood sweetheart, a white woman named Marie, Frême seeks her out—but when they are persecuted for their love, the two flee into the forest. There they meet other “maroons”: formerly enslaved people and courageous rebels who have chosen freedom at the risk of their lives.

The only known novel by Black abolitionist and political exile Louis Timagène Houat, *The Maroons* highlights slavery’s abject conditions under the French empire, and attests to the widespread phenomenon of enslaved people escaping captivity to forge a new life beyond the reach of so-called “civilization.” Banned by colonial authorities at the time of its publication in 1844, the book fell into obscurity for over a century before its rediscovery in the 1970s. Since its first reissue in France, the novel has been recognized for its extraordinary historical significance and literary quality.

“The questions [The Maroons] demanded that we sit with well over a century ago still hold within this current environment: What does freedom cost? And is true emancipation when one is willing to risk one’s own freedom and life to free others?”
—Shanta Lee, author of *Ghettoclaustrophobia* and *Black Metamorphoses*

“As I read this first contemporary account of the dark and brutal beginnings of our islands’ history … I saw the ashes of the past still smoldering all about me.”
—Ananda Devi, author of *Eve Out of Her Ruins*

LOUIS TIMAGÈNE HOUAT was a French writer and physician. Originally from Bourbon Island, now known as La Réunion, he was the author of the first novel in Réunionese literature, *Les Marrons*, which he published in Paris in 1844.

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**Counsel Culture**
Kim Hye-jin
Translated from the Korean by Jamie Chang

From award-winning Korean author Kim Hye-jin comes the contemplative, superbly-crafted story of a woman scapegoated by sudden tragedy, and the unexpected paths she must wander in search of redemption.

Haesoo is a successful therapist and regular guest on a popular TV program. But when she makes a scripted negative comment about a public figure who later commits suicide, she finds herself ostracized by friends, fired from her job, and her marriage begins to unravel. These details come to the reader gradually, in meditative prose, through bits and pieces of letters that Haesoo writes and finally abandons as she walks alone through her city.

One day she has an unexpected encounter with Sei, a 10-year-old girl attempting to feed an orange cat. Stray cats seem to be everywhere; they have the concern of one other neighborhood woman and the ire of everyone else. Like Haesoo and Sei, the cats endure various insults and recover slowly. Haesoo, who would not otherwise care about animals or form relationships with children, now finds herself pulled back by degrees into the larger world.

Praise for Kim Hye-Jin:

“Readers will be grateful to discover this new author.”
—Publisher’s Weekly

“Urgent, timely, tender.”
—Yoon Choi, author of *Skinship*

KIM HYE-JIN is an award-winning author from Daegu, South Korea. She won the JoongAng Literature Award in 2013 for *Concerning My Daughter*, and the Daesan Literary Award in 2020 for *The Work of No.9*. She was also the Special Award Laureate of the 4th Lee Hocul Literary Prize for Peace in 2020 and winner of the 2023 Kim Yoo-jung Literary Award.
Bothayna Al-Essa
Translated from the Arabic by Ranya Abdelrahman and Sawad Hussain

The new book censor hasn’t slept soundly in weeks. By day, he combs through manuscripts at a government office, looking for anything that would make a book unfit to publish—allusions to queerness, unapproved religions, any mention of life before the Revolution. By night, pilfered novels pile up in the house he shares with his wife and daughter and the characters of literary classics crowd his dreams. As the siren song of forbidden reading continues to beckon, he descends into a netherworld of resistance fighters, undercover booksellers, and outlaw librarians trying to save their history and culture.

Reckoning with the global threat to free speech and the bleak future it all but guarantees, Bothayna Al-Essa marries the steely dystopia of Orwell’s 1984 with the madcap absurdity of Carroll’s Alice in Wonderland, resulting in a dreadful twist worthy of Kafka. The Book Censor’s Library is a warning call and a love letter to stories and the delicious act of losing oneself in them.

“Lyrical and poetic … Al-Essa has a way of making the reader feel as if they themselves are being oppressed … Her words are heavy as she highlights the moments that change life abruptly.”
—Manal Shakir, Arab News

Bothayna Al-Essa’s parable is a call to arms and a dire warning for readers, urging individual action even at great risk.

Joy Sorman
Translated from the French by Lara Vergnaud

Can killing be an act of love? Hypnotic, gruesome, and exultant, Joy Sorman’s macabre ballet whirs from industrial slaughterhouses to the boutique butcher shops of Paris.

Pim is a delicate youth—stringy, solemn, and prone to bouts of unexplained weeping. When he enrolls in trade school as an apprentice butcher, his mentors have low expectations, but his lanky body conceals a peculiar flame: a passionate devotion to animals. In a business that strives to distance the chopping block from the dinner plate, his ardor might seem like a handicap, but Pim rises through the knife-wielding ranks with a barely-tethered zeal. He scours blood from floor mats and stacks carcasses in the cold room by day. By night he tries to slake his appetites: at the table, over boudin sausage and steak tartare, and in bed, with women whose flanks, ribs, and haunches he maps as they undress each other.

As Pim’s professional successes mount, his cravings gnaw. Meat crowds his waking thoughts. Even as he carves ripe flesh from exquisite bone, he labors to close the gap between man and beast—to be seen, understood, even loved, by a primordial mind. Will this ravenous obsession yield to madness, or to ecstasy?

“Ah, the drama of being a carnivore! And the guilty pleasure with which one opens this little blood-red book, which borrows from the magic of reality as much as from the truth of the fable.”
—Augustin Trapenard, Elle France

“.its lean style is tender like a mother-raised veal cutlet.”
—Emmanuelle de Boysson, Marie Claire

Joy Sorman is a novelist and documentarian who lives and works in Paris. She has written fourteen books, including Boys, boys, boys, which was awarded the 2005 Prix de Flore, Le peau de l’ours, À la folie, and Sciences de la vie, which was published by Restless Books in 2021 as Life Sciences. Tenderloin, for which she received the 2013 François Mauriac prize from l’Académie française, is Sorman’s second novel to be translated into English.

Restless Books in 2021 as
À la folie
Tenderloin
—Emmanuelle de Boysson, Marie Claire

TENDERLOIN
Joy Sorman

GENRE HORROR + LITERARY FICTION: Readers of Han Kang, Ottessa Moshfegh, Mariana Enríquez, and Jenny Hval will delight in this unrepentantly visceral novel with crossover appeal.

A CONTROVERSIAL POSITION: Guaranteed to provoke discussion among friends and book groups, Sorman makes the case for eating meat at great personal and collective cost—and in opposition to much contemporary thinking.

CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY: Tenderloin is an urgent and rigorous call for reforming our disastrous modern model of consumption.
**The Wildcat Behind Glass**

*Alki Zei*

Translated from the Greek by Karen Emmerich

Melia is spellbound by the stuffed wildcat in her family’s living room—her cousin swears that it comes to life and roams the streets at night. When she finds a signed note from the animal with secret instructions, a thrilling and dangerous adventure begins.

For Melia and her sister Myrto, summer means a break from Grandfather’s history lessons and weeks of running free at the seaside with their ragtag group of friends. Best of, all cousin Nikos will visit and tell his fabulous stories about the taxidermied wildcat, which opens its blue glass eye when it wants to do good deeds and its black one when it makes trouble. The black eye must be open lately because all the adults have been acting strangely, arguing about politics and fearful of the police. Soon even the children are divided—who can Melia trust? And can the wildcat help keep her family safe?

Set in Greece during the 1930s, when the nation was torn apart by fascism, *The Wildcat Behind Glass* is an unforgettable tale of family, humanity, and what it means to be free. From its 1963 release to the dozens of international editions and honors that followed including a Mildred L. Batchelder Award, the novel has enchanted generations of young readers. Now, a fresh English translation—the first in over 50 years—breathes new life into the timeless story.

“**A masterpiece!** Undoubtedly perfect, extremely moving. One should not always refrain from expressing one’s enthusiasm! This novel sums up all the essential qualities that one seeks in the children’s literature of our times.” —Bernard Epin, L’Ecole et la Nation

**ALKI ZEI** born in Athens in 1923, studied philosophy at the University of Athens, drama at the Athens Conservatory, and screenwriting at the Moscow Cinema Institute. She got her start in publishing by writing YA short stories for the Greek magazine Neaniki Foni. During the Second World War, she was actively involved in the struggle for freedom and democracy and against the German occupation of Greece. From 1974 until her death in 2020, she lived in Athens.

**Between this World and the Next**

*Praveen Herat*

**WINNER OF THE RESTLESS BOOKS PRIZE FOR NEW IMMIGRANT WRITING**

Praveen Herat’s gripping literary thriller is a breathtaking exploration of power, identity, unconditional love, and the question of how far we’ll go to uncover the truth.

Besieged by grief, British war photographer Joseph Nightingale travels to Cambodia, attempting to come to terms with a past that haunts him and a present that has grown unrecognizable. There, a surreal night and a brush with death lead him to Song, a young Cambodian woman grappling with the mounting psychological and physical scars left by a lifetime of poverty and violence. When Song mysteriously disappears, it’s up to Joseph to piece together the clues, and he finds himself entangled in a web of transnational crime, arms dealing, sex trafficking, and corruption, where nothing and no one are what they seem.

Pulse-pounding and poignant, *Between this World and the Next* balances unforgettable moments of cruelty with scenes of devastating softness. In this arresting, beautifully paced page-turner, Praveen Herat blurs the boundaries between good and evil, inviting readers to reexamine complicity and the consequences of looking the other way.

“Riven by dark acts, the story is uplifted by love—the love between sisters, the love of the bereaved, and a remarkable platonic love between Joseph and Song. A passionate exploration of power, poverty, and greed.”

—Prize Judges Tiphanie Yanique, Deepak Unnikrishnan, and Ilan Stavans

**PRAVEEN HERAT** was born in London to Sri Lankan parents and educated in the UK, where he graduated from Oxford and completed UEA’s Creative Writing MA. In between times, he has worked in a variety of fields: supporting victims of domestic abuse, project-managing museum events, and working with young people as an academic coach. He currently resides in Paris.
Excerpt from *Between This World and the Next*

Open your eyes. Empty your mind. What’s happening in the present will pass.

This is what Song tells herself.

It’s dark and hot and the middle of the night. Through the light that comes from the open door, she sees a bead of sweat on the tip of his nose.

He’s kind to have given her fruit juice. How long since she’s tasted juice like that. Fresh from Pursat oranges, so sharp, so sweet, the little flakes of pulp floating on her tongue.

No one has touched her in a very long time. So many hands for so many years and then weeks and months of not being touched at all.

He holds her head down, twists it to her good side.

Images circle in her mind. Her old home. The starlight on the floor. Her golden bear under the crook of her arm.

Don’t follow those thoughts, Song tells herself. You’re eighteen, not twelve. Her body goes limp. The bead of sweat finally falls—a drop on her cheek that runs away like a tear.

When they want to imagine someone else, they close their eyes. But his eyes are open, eating her up. He gasps, tenses, stays completely still.

When she looks again, he is standing in the corner of the room. His back is turned and his shoulders are hunched.

“Okun charan,” he says to the back of the door. Thank you very much. As if she had had a choice.

She listens to his feet slap down the stairs, then gets up and crosses the courtyard via the walkway.

In the guest apartment she hurries to the wet room. She will wash it away and it will flow to the river.

She listens to his feet slap down the stairs, then gets up and crosses the courtyard via the walkway.

In the guest apartment she hurries to the wet room. She will wash it away and it will flow to the river.

Dissolve into the endless tides of the sea.

Excerpt from *Between This World and the Next*

soldiers in the truck bed. People are unhappy with the results of the elections and the men will make sure they keep their objections to themselves.

Up above, she hears Thom slamming the door of the Naga Bar; the drunken muttering of the last barang as they lurch into the street and hail their motodops. The power goes out suddenly: no more karaoke, no streetlight. After the sound of the engines have faded, there is only a barking dog and the noodle boy tapping his woodblock. Toc-Toc. Toc. Toc-Toc. Toc.

Back in her room, she looks down at the trio of men on the street corner, bathed in the light of the almost full moon: the tire repairer, asleep within a fort of inner tubes; the cyclo driver curled in his passenger seat like a house cat; the motodop lying flat on his back, his feet crossed casually on the handlebars of his Daelim. She knows each man well, his temperament, his mien, their grumbles and quarrels and laughs.

She knows the people who dwell in the dark apartments above — their thoughtfulness at sunset, when they emerge onto their balconies to gaze east to the river in the rose-colored light. But none of them know her. Three rainy seasons have passed since Song has stepped outside. This building — this labyrinth of dank stairwells and partitioned boxes where bong thoms and drunken sexpats get their kicks — is her prison.

Once Sovanna has found her, they will go back to Battambang — to the days of playing tag under the stilts of the family home, the chickens squawking and scattering at their feet. In the heat of the midday sun, they will gather under the shade tree, listening to the sounds of the vast, silent country, sensing the year’s turning through the harvests of fruits and vegetables.

At the end of their working nights in Phnom Penh, they would lie together and list those harvests as a way of remembering:

“Rice,” she would say, resting her head in Sovanna’s lap.

“Mango,” Sovanna would reply.

“The flooded fields of lotus and lilies.”

Song imagines she is helping Ma, chopping the greens for the evening meal: grilled buffalo, a special treat that proves their parents do their best, even in times of hardship, even in the midst of war. Ma tells her to call Sovanna and Pa. And when she shouts bong — big sister — Sovanna answers sun — little one — just as she has always done, even though she is only ten minutes older. Then she walks steadily across the field and Song sees her beautiful face in the twilight—a face to which Song’s had once been completely identical.
The Invisible Elephant
Anna Anisimova, Illustrated by Yulia Sidneva
Translated from the Russian by Ruth Ahmedzai Kemp
“A joyous story of unique abilities and possibilities.” —Booklist
Hardcover List Price: US $22
ISBN: 9781632063243 • 5.25” x 8.25” • 112 pages
Children’s Fiction / Ages 6 - 12—illustrated chapter book / blindness / disability / Russia

Fishing for the Little Pike
Juhan Karila
Translated from the Finnish by Lola Rogers
“This twisted love letter to the rural region leaves a lasting impression.” —Publisher’s Weekly
Hardcover List Price: US $19
ISBN: 9781632063434 • 5.25” x 8.25” • 352 pages
Fiction—Fairy Tales, Folk Tales, Legends & Mythology / Magical Realism / World Literature / Finland / Nature & the Environment
Literary
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The House of the Lost on the Cape
Sachiko Kashiwaba
Illustrations by Yukiko Saito
Translated from the Japanese by Avery Fischer Udagawa
“A powerful story of healing.” —Kirkus Reviews, Starred Review
Paperback List Price: US $18
ISBN: 9781632063373 • 5.5” x 8.25” • 224 pages
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Bram Stoker, Illustrations by Kaitlin Chan
Foreword by Alexander Chee
Introduction by Silvia Moreno-Garcia
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The Simple Art of Killing a Woman
Patricia Melo
Translated from the Portuguese by Sophie Lewis
“Though the subject is horrifying, especially in the details about marred and dismembered victims, the narrator’s voice is captivating and compelling, offering strength and purpose rather than despair. A deeply affecting novel illuminating the costs of being a woman in a dangerous, misogynistic society.” —Kirkus Reviews
Paperback List Price: US $17
ISBN: 9781632063465 • 5.5” x 8.25” • 254 pages
Fiction—Crime / Latin America / Literary
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eBook ISBN: 9781632063472

An Unruled Body
Ani Gjika
“Readers will be impressed by the author’s bold willingness to face the horrors of her childhood as she artfully blends an insightful look at her native country’s societal issues with her own family’s immigration story and her ongoing journey to sexual health. A poignant literary and personal achievement.” —Booklist, Starred Review
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Savagery
Alejandra Banca
Translated from the Spanish by Katie Brown
Aug 6, 2024
Anna Thalberg
Eduardo Sangarcía
Translated from the Spanish by Elizabeth Bryer
Sep 3, 2024

John the Skeleton
Triinu Laan
Translated from the Estonian by Adam Cullen
Oct 1, 2024

21st-Century American Plays on Immigration
Mfoniso Udofia, Mona Mansour, Hansol Jung, Danai Gurira, Martyna Majok, et al.
Edited by Isaiah Stavchansky
Oct 15, 2024

FORTHCOMING IN FALL 2024
YONDER HIGHLIGHTS

**Run For Your Life**
Silvana Gandolfi
Translated into English by Ilana Stavans
Translated into Arabic by Randa Sayegh
"The [story] subtly acknowledges that a new generation will have to figure out how to make peace and that it is possible for children to lead us."
— The New York Times
World Rights

**Ellie’s Voice, or Trööömmmpffff**
Piret Raud
Translated from the Estonian by Adam Cullen
World Literature Today’s 75 Notable Translations of 2020

**The Souls of Black Folk**
W. E. B. Du Bois
Introduction by Yann R. Newkirk II
"An instant classic filled with supernatural intrigue and real-world friendship."
— Kirkus Reviews, Starred Review
Hardcover List Price: US $18 ISBN: 9781632063038 • 5.5˝ × 8.25˝ • 240 pages • B&W illustrations Middle Grade Fiction: Japan / Mystery / Fantasy / Legend
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**1,001 Creatures**
Laura Merz and Aino Järvinen
Translated from the Finnish by Emily Jeremiah
USBBY 2021 Outstanding International Book

**Daniel and Ismail**
Juan Pablo Iglesias & Alex Peris
Translated into English by Ilana Stavans
Translated into Hebrew by Eliezer Nowodworski and Frieda Press-Danieli
Translated into Arabic by Randa Sayegh
"The [story] subtly acknowledges that a new generation will have to figure out how to make peace and that it is possible for children to lead us."
— The New York Times
Rights Held: World English

**Middlemarch**
George Eliot
Introduction by Rebecca Mead
Illustrations by Keren Katz
Hardcover List Price: US $24 • 9781632063069 • 6” × 9” • 752 pages Classics: British Fiction / Victorian / Women / Class • World Rights

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Daniel Defoe
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Introduction by Yann R. Newkirk II
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