

6 authors to keep on your radar

These up-and-coming authors are going places, and readers will be hot on their heels.



Leta McCollough Seletzky

Author of *The Kneeling Man*
Counterpoint | April 4

In the famous photograph of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., one man is kneeling down beside King on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel, trying to staunch the blood from the fatal head wound. This kneeling man, Leta McCollough Seletzky's

father, was a member of the activist group the Invaders, but he was also an undercover Memphis police officer reporting on the activities of this group.

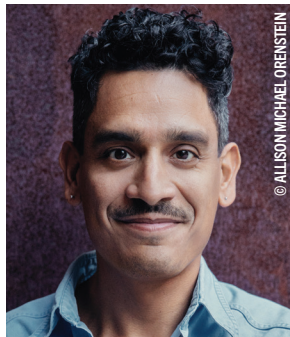
Seletzky is a former litigator turned essayist and a National Endowment for the Arts 2022 Creative Writing Fellow, and in *The Kneeling Man: My Father's Life as a Black Spy Who Witnessed the Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.*, she reveals the story of her father, who went on to work at the CIA, and reflects upon the full weight of these revelations.

Alejandro Varela

Author of *The People Who Report More Stress*

Astra House | April 4

Last year, Alejandro Varela published his first novel, *The Town of Babylon*, and it became a finalist for the National Book Award for Fiction. Varela is following up his hot-out-of-the-gate success with an overlapping story collection centering on the intersecting lives of a group of mostly queer and Latinx New York City residents. The stories explore many of the same themes as Varela's novel—systemic racism, gentrification and economic injustice—and since his graduate studies were in public health, he brings deep insight to these topics and balances them with crisp humor and a lot of heart.



Emily Tesh

Author of *Some Desperate Glory*

Tordotcom | April 11

Emily Tesh won acclaim and a devoted readership with her Greenhollow duology of novellas, the first of which, *Silver in the Wood*, won a World Fantasy Award. The Greenhollow duology was a romantic take on age-old English folklore, but for her first

novel, Tesh switches gears to science fiction and heads into darker moral territory. Set in a future where Earth has been destroyed by aliens, *Some Desperate Glory* follows Kyr, a young girl growing up in an isolated, militaristic community, where she is being trained to avenge the planet. She soon discovers that the rest of the universe is far more complex than she imagined and that she has a lot further to go to become the hero she wants to be.



Sarah Cypher

Author of *The Skin and Its Girl*
Ballantine | April 25

After two decades as a freelance book editor, Sarah Cypher is making her fiction debut with a novel that draws from her own Lebanese American family's history, which can be traced back to the incredible Kanaan Olive Soap factory in Nablus, Palestine. On the day of the factory's

(actual) destruction, a Palestinian American girl named Betty is born with bright blue skin in *The Skin and Its Girl*; as an adult, Betty begins to read the journals kept by the family matriarch, which reveal her aunt's choice to hide her sexuality during the family's immigration to the U.S., a discovery that helps Betty follow her own heart.

Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah

Author of *Chain-Gang All-Stars*

Pantheon | May 2

It's pretty incredible when a short story collection becomes an instant *New York Times* bestseller, and doubly so when it's a debut, as in the case of Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah's devastating and nightmarish *Friday Black* (2018). With his highly anticipated first novel, Adjei-Brenyah continues in the realm of brutal, dystopian surrealism with one of the most audacious premises of the year: Reality television meets America's for-profit prison system in this story of two female gladiators, Loretta Thurwar and Hamara "Hurricane Staxxx" Stacker, who fight for their freedom from a private prison reality entertainment system.



Jamie Loftus

Author of *Raw Dog*
Forge | May 23

Jamie Loftus is best known as a comedian, TV writer and podcaster, including co-hosting "The Bechdel Cast" with screenwriter Caitlin Durante on the HowStuffWorks network. Loftus' debut book, *Raw Dog: The Naked Truth About Hot Dogs*, is part memoir and part social critique that recounts her cross-country road trip in the summer of 2021 to investigate that backyard barbecue staple, the illustrious hot dog. Along the way, Loftus delves into all the ways hot dogs embody issues of class and culture in the United States, illuminating the complex history of this quintessential American food with her signature mix of intellect and unhinged humor.

All publication dates are subject to change.