



## Men and Dogs

by Katie Crouch | ★★★★★

REVIEWED BY MEREDITH MARAN

NOVEL

Prepare to have your heart broken while laughing out loud at this breathtaking, scathingly sardonic novel. From her opening line—"Two days before Hannah's father disappeared, he took her out in his boat"—Crouch (*Girls in Trucks*) grabs you and never lets go.

The story is delivered in the alternating voices of Hannah at age 11 and Hannah the thirtysomething "adult," a train wreck of a woman whom we first meet in her San Francisco loft. Hung over and recently abandoned by the husband she's been cheating on, she is composing a shopping list. "Better rug. Music contraption. More wine. Husband." Crouch renders San Franciscans in caustic living color: the hipsters' ironic T-shirts ("Nuke a Gay Whale for Jesus"); the "trustafarian couple" downstairs; the yuppies' \$115 takeout pasta. When Hannah goes home to Charleston to dry out and try to find her father, Crouch brings her eccentric southern kinfolk to life with equal verve. In the hands of a less adept author, this tightly wound tale of one woman's unraveling and redemption might seem more grim than guffaw-worthy. But with Crouch in charge, the reader is assured of a reflective yet riotous ride.



### NONFICTION



#### THE BRIDGE

by David Remnick

A well-researched account of Obama's "political, racial and sentimental education" en route to the White House.



#### JENNIEMAE & JAMES

by Brooke Newman

A mathematician's daughter recalls the sustaining bond between her dad and the family's numbers-savvy maid.



#### DEAD END GENE POOL

by Wendy Burden

Raised by "Gaga and Popsie" while her mom jet-setted, this Vanderbilt heir has tales aplenty.