

WTBBL Recommended Reads: There's No Sense in Nonsense!

In honor of April Fools, WTBBL is taking a journey into the absurd, nonsensical, and fantastical! Join us as we explore titles that use humor and whimsy to challenge the status quo, combat existential dread, and toy with narrative structure. This April Fools, we won't be pulling any pranks, but rather enjoying the works of those who taunt and tease the very idea of literature itself.

After Alice by Gregory Maguire and Lewis Carroll, 2015 ([BR021408](#), [DB083521](#) and [DBC02759](#))

When Alice toppled down the rabbit-hole 150 years ago, she found a Wonderland as rife with inconsistent rules and abrasive egos as the world she left behind. But what of that world? How did 1860s Oxford react to Alice's disappearance? Ada, a friend of Alice's, is off to visit her friend, but arrives a moment too late—and tumbles down the rabbit-hole herself.

Ada brings to Wonderland her own imperfect apprehension of cause and effect as she embarks on an odyssey to find Alice and see her safely home from this surreal world below the world. – from the Publisher

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland And Through the Looking Glass by Lewis Carroll, 1865 ([DB050842](#) and [BR012746](#))

Extraordinary things happen when a little girl falls down a rabbit hole and encounters the White Rabbit, the

Cheshire Cat, the Mad Hatter, and other unusual characters. Alice's second adventure takes her to a land with a peculiar back-to-front order in which everything is reversed.

Broadcast Hysteria: Orson Welles's War of the Worlds and the Art of Fake News by A. Brad Schwartz 2015 ([DB082063](#))

The 1938 broadcast of Orson Welles's adaptation of *The War of the Worlds* by H. G. Wells is one of the most famous events in radio history. Schwartz examines the radio play in its historical context, including the stories of panic the program supposedly caused among listeners.

Even Cowgirls Get the Blues by Tom Robbins, 1976 ([DB014636](#))

Sissy Hankshaw, a madcap young woman endowed with excessively large thumbs, hitchhikes her way through life finding new adventures. Her employer, a wealthy male countess who promotes feminine hygiene products, sends her on a modelling assignment to his beauty spa, the Rubber Rose Ranch in the Dakotas, where the cowgirls are threatening to take over.

Fight Club by Chuck Palahniuk, 1996 ([DB083519](#) and [BR021393](#))

The first rule of fight club is: you don't talk about fight club. The novel that inspired the movie, by Pacific Northwest native author Chuck Palahniuk follows an unnamed narrator suffering from insomnia who finds relief in joining other men suffering psychoses in beating each

other in one-on-one combat. As the group expands under their leader, Tyler, they take on a violent political motive, with quite literal explosive consequences. But, how much of it is in the narrator's mind? – WTBBL Staff

If on a Winter's Night a Traveler by Italo Calvino, 1979 ([DBC08607](#) and [BRG01289](#))

If on a Winter's Night a Traveler is a marvel of ingenuity, an experimental text that looks longingly back to the great age of narration—"when time no longer seemed stopped and did not yet seem to have exploded."
--Goodreads

Interior Chinatown by Charles Yu, 2020 ([DB098416](#) and [BR023494](#))

Every day, actor Willis Wu heads to the Chinatown restaurant where they are perpetually filming a police procedural TV show. He feels like he plays a bit role even in his own life, but dreams of one day having a chance at something more. National Book Award Winner.

Let's Pretend This Never Happened: A Mostly True Memoir by Jenny Lawson, 2012 ([DB074647](#))

Popular internet blogger Jenny Lawson uses dark humor to describe her everyday life. Recounts racing armadillos and swimming with pigs during her childhood in West Texas, dealing with an anxiety disorder by hiding in bathrooms during dinner parties, and discovering that her boyfriend was planning to propose – not murder her.
– from the Publisher

Near to the Wild Heart by Clarice Lispector, 1943 ([DBC01386](#))

This novel, written in a stream-of-consciousness style reminiscent of the English-language Modernists, centers around the childhood and early adulthood of a character named Joana, who bears strong resemblance to her author. The book, particularly its revolutionary language, brought its young, unknown creator to great prominence in Brazilian letters and earned her the prestigious Graça Aranha Prize. – Goodreads

NW by Zadie Smith, 2012 ([DB075525](#), Español [DB105697](#))

Set in northwest London, Zadie Smith's brilliant tragicomic novel follows four locals as they try to make adult lives outside of the council estate of their childhood. In private houses and public parks, at work and at play, these Londoners inhabit a complicated place, as beautiful as it is brutal, where the thoroughfares hide the back alleys and taking the high road can sometimes lead you to a dead end. Depicting the modern urban zone—familiar to city-dwellers everywhere—*NW* is a quietly devastating novel of encounters, mercurial and vital, like the city itself. –from the Publisher

Orlando by Virginia Woolfe, 1928 ([BR009501](#), [DB023691](#), [LP012065](#), Русский [DBF04351](#))

Fantasy about a young Elizabethan nobleman who, by book's end, has been transformed into a young woman. The author examines English literary and social history through the 300 years of Orlando's life.

Tenth of December: Stories by George Saunders, 2013 ([DB076097](#) and [BR019818](#))

Unsettling, insightful, and hilarious, the stories in *Tenth of December* not only entertain and delight, they fulfill Chekhov's dictum that art should "prepare us for tenderness." –Goodreads

The Complete Verse and Other Nonsense by Edward Lear, 2001 ([DB061260](#))

Collected limericks and whimsical rhymes of the British writer Edward Lear (1812-1888). Includes "The Owl and the Pussy-cat," "The Jumblies," and "The Scroobious Pip." – from the Publisher

Waiting for Godot by Samuel Beckett, 1953 ([DB014653](#) and [BR016880](#))

This story revolves around two seemingly homeless men waiting for someone—or something—named Godot. Vladimir and Estragon wait near a tree, inhabiting a drama spun of their own consciousness. The result is a comical wordplay of poetry, dreamscapes, and nonsense, which has been interpreted as mankind's inexhaustible search for meaning. Beckett's language pioneered an expressionistic minimalism that captured the existential post-World War II Europe. His play remains one of the most magical and beautiful allegories of our time. - Amazon