



An Oldsmobile Super 88 Fiesta and a 1958 Pontiac Bonneville in Palm Springs, 1962, from *Midnight Modern*, by Tom Blachford (Powerhouse).

Of
Microbes
and Men

Michael Tolkin is a soothsayer, an early reader of our psychological topography, and his new book, *NK3* (Atlantic Monthly Press), is either the last great Hollywood novel or the first great book of Burning Man. In Tolkin's post-apocalyptic, nanobacterium-plagued near future, the **HOLLYWOOD** sign presides over a Los Angeles that struggles to carry on in a world where people's memories have been destroyed. Even as a ruin L.A. still has its magic. *NK3* is a strangely terrifying if celebratory novel of remnants, fragments, the nag of one's inner voice, and dim reminders of the dissolve that has become America.

—A. M. HOMES



IN SHORT

Glenn Frankel's *High Noon* (Bloomsbury) puts Hollywood and Washington on the stand. **Iké Udé** takes a tour through the radical beauty of *Nollywood Portraits* (Skira). Not all our children will be raised in **Kevin Wilson's** *Perfect Little World* (Ecco). Risible raconteur **Jim Shepard** imagines *The World to Come* (Knopf). An immigrant's Civil War years blow through **Sebastian Barry's** carbine in *Days Without End* (Viking). **Kate Hennessy** strings together a rosary of memories for her grandmother Dorothy Day (Scribner). Sabotage and subterfuge collide in **Giles Milton's** Churchill's *Ministry of Ungentlemanly Warfare* (Picador). **Bill Hayes** is smitten with Oliver Sacks and their *Insomniac City* (Bloomsbury). **Mats Gustafson** is the good kind of sketchy for *Dior* (Rizzoli). **Kevin Davis** mounts *The Brain Defense* (Penguin Press). **Charles Campisi** locks up good cops gone bad in *Blue on Blue* (Scribner). *The Kingdom of Happiness* (Touchstone) is upon us in **Aimee Groth's** Zappos zinger. **Ali Smith's** first season, *Autumn* (Pantheon), has arrived. **J. M. Coetzee** pas de bourrées around *The Schooldays of Jesus* (Viking). **Min Jin Lee's** *Pachinko* (Grand Central) plays with the destiny of one Korean family. **Yuval Noah Harari's** *Homo Deus* (Harper) knows what plagues us. The stars align for **Lawrence Weschler** in *Waves Passing in the Night* (Bloomsbury). **Elan Mastai's** natty narrator finds himself in *All Our Wrong Today's* (Dutton). **Viet Thanh Nguyen** returns with tales of *The Refugees* (Grove). **Mary Graham** makes a power play for *The Presidents' Secrets* (Yale). **Elinor Lipman** satirizes suburbia *On Turpentine Lane* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt). Steven Cohen hedges his bets in **Sheelah Kolhatkar's** *Black Edge* (Random House). **Joyce Carol Oates** wrote *A Book of American Martyrs* (Ecco) in the time it took you to read this. —S. C.

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Dead saints, gnarled roots, abandoned buildings, rusted balconies, single matches, warm skulls. Such images provide the mulch for **Mariana Enríquez's** slim but phenomenal *Things We Lost in the Fire* (Hogarth), wherein a contemporary Argentina grapples with its political future and knotty past. Enríquez tells charmingly—sometimes humorously—macabre tales of children gone missing, teenage girls experimenting with drugs, tragically lost loves, and hotels turned inhospitable. In her hands, the country's inequality, beauty, and corruption tangle together to become a manifestation of our own darkest thoughts and fears. The spookiness of these 12 stories sets into the reader's mind like a jet stone, sparking through all that darkness.

Happy days unclear again: **Kay Redfield Jamison** delves into the human propensity for melancholy, this time with one

Hot Type

human in particular. **Robert Lowell**, *Setting the River on Fire* (Knopf) is a study in one genius reaching back in time to unpack the psyche of another. **Patricia Bosworth** recounts a glamorously restrictive but never restrictively glamorous 1950s New York in *The Men in My Life* (Harper). **Richard Mason's** amateur arborist makes a foray into the forest in *Who Killed Piet Barol?* (Knopf). **Jerome Loving** unearths the deep cuts of *The Executioner's Song* in *Jack and Norman* (Thomas Dunne). The Nazis move from mugging museums to looting libraries in **Anders Rydell's** *The Book Thieves* (Viking). But Sufi-ce it to say, it's **Brad Gooch** who holds the key to *Rumi's Secret* (Harper).

—SLOANE CROSLLEY

