she provides a genuinely inspirational example without ever taking herself too seriously. Agent: Anthony Mattero, Foundry + Media. (July)

A Carnival of Losses: **Notes Nearing Ninety**

Donald Hall. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, \$25 (224p) ISBN 978-1-328-82634-3

Former U.S. poet laureate (2006-2007), Hall reflects on aging and death in this candid and often humorous memoir. Hall meanders over mundane losses in his life-the demise of mill towns, the root cellar in his New Hampshire home—as well as the death of his wife, poet Jane Kenyon, 20 years ago, and the poets he has known. In a meditative opening, Hall says about aging, "you are old when the waiter doesn't mention that you are holding the menu upside down," and notes that "in your eighties you take two naps a day. Nearing ninety you don't count the number of naps." He reminisces about various poets he's known: James Dickey was "the best liar I ever knew"; Allen Tate "always looked grumpy"; James Wright was always passionate about literature. Hall no longer writes poetry or essays, but prefers to write about his life and experiences and "tell short anecdotes.... why should the nonagenarian hold anything back?" In the longest section, "Necropoetics," Hall bares his grief during his wife's prolonged death from cancer, recognizing how much her voice still lives in his own, "spiraling together images and diphthongs of the dead who were once the living, our necropoetics of grief and love in the unforgivable absence of flesh." Hall's ruminative and detailed reflections on life make this a fantastic follow-up to his Essays After Eighty. (July)

* City of Devils: The Two Men Who Ruled the Underworld of Old Shanghai

Paul French. Picador, \$28 (320p) ISBN 978-1-250-17058-3

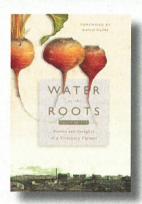
Drugs, gambling, vice, and banditry power China's seaport mecca in this rollicking true crime saga. Historian French (Midnight in Peking) recreates Shanghai between the world wars, when its extraterritorial status—the United States, European nations, and Japan legally controlled parts of the city—made it a

booming metropolis and home to a teeming expat community of Jews fleeing Nazism, Russians fleeing bolshevism, and shady Westerners fleeing their pasts. French's panorama centers on Joe Farren, a Viennese Jew who became a dance-show impresario and casino-owner; and Jack Riley, an escaped convict from Oklahoma who ran slot machines, smuggled heroin, and financed Farren's classier enterprises. In French's wonderfully atmospheric portrait, Shanghai is a tapestry of grungy dive bars, swanky nightspots, drunken soldiers, brazen showgirls, Chinese gangsters, corrupt cops, and schemers like "Evil Evelyn," a madam who enticed wealthy wives with gigolos and blackmailed them with the resulting photos. The 1937 Japanese military occupation darkens the party with war, privation, and despair. French's two-fisted prose—"When Boobee hops on a bar stool, lights an opium-tipped cigarette, and crosses her long legs, the sound of a dozen tensed-up male necks swinging round is like ... a gunshot"—makes this deep noir history unforgettable. (Iuly)

Empress: The Astonishing Reign of Nur Jahan

Ruby Lal. Norton, \$27.95 (320p) ISBN 978-0-393-23934-8

In this feminist biography of a strong and independent Muslim woman who, over the intervening centuries, has been reduced to a caricature of wifely devotion in the popular imagination, Lal makes clear her subject's relevance. Lal, a history professor at Emory, goes far beyond the fables to demonstrate that Nur Jahan was a force to be reckoned with: she ruled jointly as co-sovereign of the Mughal Empire with her husband, the emperor Jahangir, from their marriage in 1611 and was recognized by foreign and domestic observers as the true power in the realm. The women of the royal household, including Jahangir's 19 other wives, spent most of their lives sequestered, but "the harem offered women surprising opportunities—wide horizons behind high walls." Jahangir was an aesthete who concerned himself primarily with "the grand ritual acts of ideal Mughal kingship," such as "offering his subjects glimpses of his semi-divine person from the imperial balcony." Meanwhile, it was Nur Jahan



Water at the Roots: Poems and Insights of a Visionary **Farmer**

Philip Britts, edited by Jennifer Harries.

Plough, \$16 trade paper (180p) ISBN 978-0-87486-128-0

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This evocative collection brings together the poems and essays of British farmer Philip Britts (1907-1949), who led a Bruderhof community of Christian pacifists in Devon, England, before WWII. As Europe plunged into war, Britts moved his pacifist congregation from England to a settlement in Paraguay, where they felt they could live out their ideals of peace. Britts's poems and musings-collected here by Harries, a writer who attended his original congregation as a young girl—offer a window into a life defined by clear Christian values of radical pacifism, love of neighbor, and care for the Earth. Britts provides a gentle corrective to modern impulses of acquisition and aggression, his ebullient verses always returning to wonder and awe at the natural world: "All life is joy again/ The longest drought shall pass/ Bringeth sweet drenching rain/ Life for the grass." Britts's efforts in Paraguay may strike modern readers as misguided ecologically and socially (he elevates his way of living and farming above that of the locals), but his refusal to participate in WWII and his respect for the South Americans redeem him in the end. Britts's work will be an inspiration for Christians and humanists seeking peace and purpose in a tumultuous world. (Mar.)

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who commissioned palaces and gardens, issued royal edicts and minted currency, and even defended the realm from usurpers, "sitting atop a war elephant and armed with a musket." Closely researched and vividly written, this telling finds that the truth is as fantastic and fascinating as myth. (July)

. **Give People Money:** How a Universal Basic Income **Would End Poverty, Revolutionize** Work, and Remake the World Annie Lowrey. Crown, \$26 (288p) ISBN 978-1-5247-5876-9

What would happen if everyone received \$1,000 from the government each month, no strings attached? Lowrey, a contributing editor for Atlantic magazine, examines the promises and pitfalls of a universal basic income, or UBI, in this complex analysis. Considering examples such as Iran, which replaced subsidies for certain goods with a UBI in 2010, and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, whose tribal members receive profit payouts on tribally owned casinos, Lowrey debunks the main critique leveled against UBI: that it would disincentivize work. Drawing on interviews with tech tycoons, development economists, and a diverse sample of the world's poor, she persuasively argues that UBI would actually stimulate higher levels of investment in small businesses, increase workers' bargaining power, and serve as a buffer against the technological advances that are likely to replace workers with robots. Lowrey is at her best discussing the potential role UBI could play in achieving development outcomes in places like Jharkhand, one of India's poorest states and a prime example of the inefficiency of traditional state-funded poverty alleviation programs. This book is a lively introduction to a seemingly quixotic concept that has attracted thinkers from John Stuart Mill to Martin Luther King Jr., and that continues to provoke. Agent: Chris Parris-Lamb, the Gernert Co. (Iuly)

I Can't Date Jesus: Love, Sex, Family, Race, and Other Reasons I've Put My Faith in Beyoncé Michael Arceneaux, Atria, \$17 trade paper (256p) ISBN 978-1-5011-7885-6

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"The world is still a harsh place for

those who don't fit in with the status quo," writes journalist Arceneaux in this witty and powerful collection of personal essays. Over the course of 17 pieces, Arceneaux explores his experiences as a black, gay man and Catholic Southerner—identities frequently at odds with each other. Arceneaux recalls praying to Jesus to "cure" him of his homosexuality as a teenager in Houston, and later being "recruited" for priesthood as a college student at Howard University, noting at that period in his life he saw his future self as "something more along the lines of 'Katie Couric with a dick." He later writes about his postcollege stints living in Los Angeles and New York while trying to make it as a writer ("here are the topics mainstream outlets love for me to write about from the perspective of a gay Black man: Black homophobia, AIDS, sexual racism"). His dating escapades, meanwhile, are frequently hilarious and sometimes disastrous: one man was judged unacceptable not because he had beaten up an ex-boyfriend, but because he worked for Fox News, while another brought a flea infestation into Arceneaux's apartment. Arceneaux has a biting sense of humor, referring to the persistence of Catholic guilt, for example, as "the herpes of your conscience," and a nasty roommate as "land's answer to Ursula the Sea Witch." Arceneaux's confident voice and unapologetic sense of humor will appeal to fans of Roxane Gav. (Iuly)

I See Life Through **Rose-Colored Glasses: True Stories and Confessions** Lisa Scottoline and Francesca Serritella. St. Martin's, \$24.99 (352p) ISBN 978-1-250-16305-9

Novelist Scottoline (After Anna, etc.) and daughter Serritella team up for the eighth in a series of entertaining motherdaughter humor books, combining entries in their "Chick Wit" column for the Philadelphia Inquirer and new material. The authors volley between Scottoline's amusing outlook on aging and Serritella's dating ups and downs. Scottoline's style is characteristically clipped and peppered with hilarious one-liners (e.g., on Brawny paper towels, "I've never relied on a paper towel to give me strength. I have chocolate for that"; "Yes, I have multiples. Not



orgasms. Pets." Meanwhile. Serritella digs into topics including breaking up with boyfriends, the benefits of enjoying family Christmas without a date, and getting her

first Brazilian bikini wax. This close mother-daughter team leaves no stone unturned, and their slew of animals (six dogs and a couple of cats altogether) and their beloved and outspoken deceased mother/grandmother (aka Mother Mary) are frequently referenced. This summer beach read-which is indeed "like a glass of rosé, between two covers"-is sure to cheer readers spanning the generations but will be of particular appeal to mothers and daughters. (July)

We're Doomed. Now What? **Essays on War and Climate Change**

Roy Scranton. Soho, \$16.95 trade paper (360p) ISBN 978-1-61695-936-4

Novelist and nonfiction author Scranton (Learning to Die in the Anthropocene) struggles to provide satisfying responses to his titular question in this jumbled collection. His premise is that an era of environmental and political catastrophe already exists, and the only meaningful next step is to "let our current civilization die" and find a "new order of meaning." Specifics of what that new order looks like, beyond a repudiation of consumer capitalism, are left abstract. Scranton organizes his essays under thematic headings: "Climate & Change," "War & Memory," and "Violence & Communion." The climate essays cover, among other topics, the melting of the Arctic ice cap and the possibility of a Texas mega-hurricane, and express pessimism about the possibility of mitigating global warming. The war section covers Scranton's memories of patrolling Iraq as an Army private, attending antiwar rallies after his return to the U.S., returning to Baghdad as a civilian to witness the 2014 elections, and his concerns about the dangers of fetishizing American power. In the "Violence" essays, Scranton draws connections between victims of war, terror, and