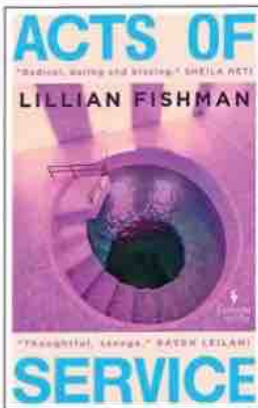


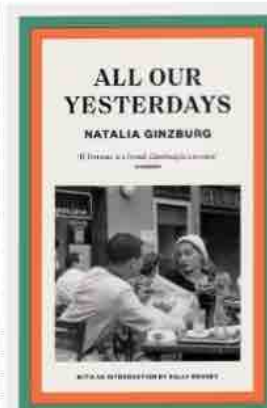
Best summer reads – for hipsters to history buffs

What will you be reading in your sunbed this year? **Jennifer Lipman** rounds up the best new beach books, from millennial romance and Israeli short stories to wartime sagas



Acts of service
By Lillian Fishman
Europa Press £12.99

► **SALLY ROONEY** has a lot to answer for. The millennial wonderkind has become the poster child for meditative novels where attractive young things have lots of sex, and spend even more time angsty about it. Certainly everyone in *Acts of Service* is quirky and slightly bohemian, and it's no spoiler to say they end up in bed together (a lot). Our heroine, Eve, is an aimless graduate working as a waitress, ostensibly loved up with an older girlfriend. But she finds herself drawn into a menage-a-trois with a wealthy businessman, Nathan, and his lover Olivia, and extracting herself proves challenging. But is sex ever just sex, or is it always about power too? Where is the line between obsession and abuse? This won't be for everyone, but Fishman has marked herself out as a contender for Rooney's crown.



All Our Yesterdays
By Natalia Ginzburg
Daunt Books £10.99

► **BORN TO A Jewish father and a Catholic mother, the Italian novelist Natalia Ginzburg, who died in 1991, wrote extensively about her country's political history and its anti fascist struggles, exploring in particular the impact of both on family life: her Jewish husband was murdered in 1944 for his political activities. Daunt are**

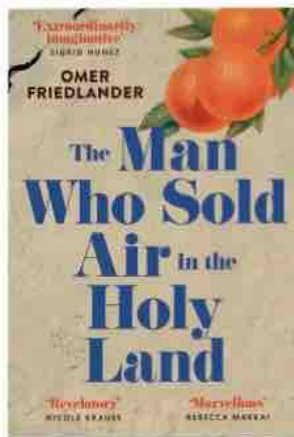
currently reissuing her novels, of which *All Our Yesterdays* is one of her best – a panoramic, richly satisfying story of two Italian families as their lives are inexorably shaped by the encroaching war. Ginzburg's deceptively offhand style is disarming: as the toll of everyday wartime experiences grows, her novel deepens in intensity. A terrific new discovery.



Last Resort
By Andrew Lipstein
Weidenfeld & Nicolson £14.99

► **HOW FAR** you'll get with Andrew Lipstein's darkly comic debut depends on your tolerance for self-absorbed pseudo-intellectual hipsters. A young writer is lunching with his insufferable book agent on the brink of a life-changing signing. Only Caleb's story isn't entirely his own, and its originator forces him into

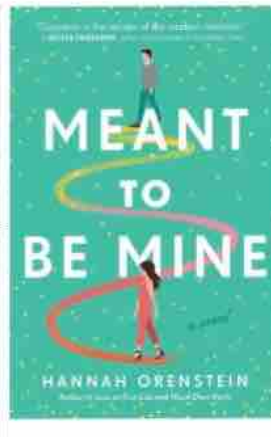
a Faustian pact that sees Caleb's name left off the published work. Caleb gets the payout. But what is success without public glory? And where does ownership of one's story begin and end? That Caleb is someone you'd dread sitting next to a dinner party could be seen as a barrier to enjoyment, yet his predicament and inevitable downfall is highly entertaining.



The Man Who Sold Air in the Holy Land
By Omer Friedlander
John Murray £12.99

► **SHORT STORIES** are always handy to have in the back pocket while travelling – after all, plenty of holiday makers are likely to be spending a lot of time in departure lounges this summer. This new collection by the young Jerusalem born writer Omer Friedlander and set in his native

Israel hardly offers care free escapism, given the extent to which Arab Israeli relations hover in the background. Yet Friedlander's humane explorations of love, friendship and the unending cost of conflict, against backdrops that range from orange groves in Jaffa to a check point in Gaza, are in turn funny, tender and achingly compassionate.

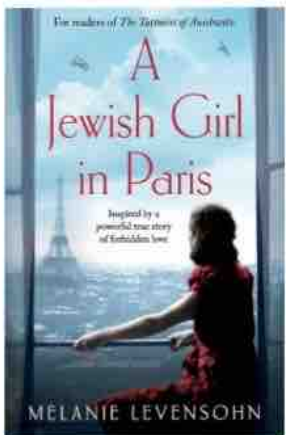


Meant to Be Mine
By Hannah Orenstein
Headline £9.99

► **THIS IS** a warm frothy bath of a book that just screams "read on a sun-lounger". Jewish New Yorker Edie Meyer has a "meet-cute" on a plane with charming musician Theo; the twist is that she knows the relationship is meant to be, because her grandmother has prophesied the day each family member will

meet their soulmate. Edie has let her supposed destiny guide her choices up until now. But as the relationship unfolds, she begins to wonder whether she ought to be taking charge of her romantic fate. Featuring plenty of kosher trimmings and a glamorous post-Covid Manhattan setting, this is entirely predictable and implausible, and an awful lot of fun.

Books + Judaism



A Jewish Girl In Paris
By Melanie Levensohn
Macmillan £16.99

► **WHEN IT COMES TO** Holocaust novels, my preference is for stories inspired by real events. But Levensohn's novel – inspired by her discovery of a distant relative who was murdered by the Nazis – is an elegantly drawn tale. Told in two timelines, as a Frenchwoman in America seeks to uncover a decades-old mystery, it focuses largely on Judith, a Jewish Sorbonne student who falls in love with a wealthy banker's son just as the Nazis occupy Paris. If the prose is a tad florid (so much romantic yearning!), and the coincidences far too neat, it is redeemed by a pacy narrative, relatable heroines, and an eye for historical detail about life in occupied France.

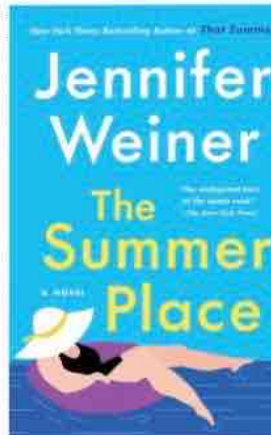
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The Latecomer
By Jean Hanff Korelitz
Faber £8.99

► **JEAN HANFF** Korelitz excels at compulsive page turners – she is, after all, the author behind recent HBO hit thriller *The Undoing*. This effortlessly readable latest centres on the Brooklyn based Oppenheims, a dysfunctional brood: Salo is indelibly scarred by a traumatic teenage event, while his children, JVF triplets, can't stand each other. It's narrated by their quixotic sister, born 17 years later, although her perspective is omniscient, meaning the reader has full access to each Oppenheimer's point of view. It's a leisurely, ultimately hopeful exploration of familial disunity with a sharp, often amused eye on modern identity politics: the chapter in which one triplet invites his Mormon college friends to an inclusive seder is absolutely priceless

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The Summer Place
By Jennifer Weiner
Hachette £14.99

► **IT'S** A travesty that Jennifer Weiner is not better loved in the UK. The author of more than 20 novels, from *In Her Shoes* (adapted into a Cameron Diaz/Toni Collette film) to the absolutely gripping *Mrs Everything*, she excels at writing about ordinary people dealing with everyday stuff, from dieting and dating to divorce and

generational divides, like an American Jewish Marian Keyes. Her latest kicks off at a post-pandemic Shabbat dinner where a surprise engagement is announced. Told from multiple perspectives, the novel's characters are wonderfully specific, and you'll find yourself rooting for every one of them to find their happily ever afters.