

(FICTION)

THE ELLE'S LETTRES 2016 READERS' PRIZE

15 ELLE readers choose their favorite among three promising recent books—this month, mom-as-protagonist novels

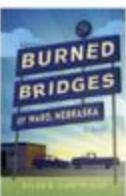
1 **THE EXPATRIATES**
JANICE Y. K. LEE
(VIKING)

Separate lives become critically entwined in this multilayered portrait of three American women living in Hong Kong. Margaret, a brokenhearted mother; Mercy, a floundering twentysomething; and Hilary, a privileged, childless housewife, each cope with private loss in a foreign country—and the result, as in Lee's previous hit, *The Piano Teacher*, is an emotionally gripping page-turner. "Be prepared to cry," wrote one reader, "and drop all your plans; you'll want to spend all day and night with this novel."



2 **THE BURNED
BRIDGES OF
WARD, NEBRASKA**
EILEEN CURTRIGHT
(LITTLE A)

In this dark comedy,



(FICTION)

A SMALL GOOD THING

Elizabeth Strout's exquisite new book

By Kate Christensen

Amy and Isabelle, Elizabeth Strout's previous hit, Elizabeth was about a 16-year-old girl. The fraught intensity provided by the laser-focused, beautiful (Random House), Strout reimagines her mother and daughter in a time around, the daughter, gash, Illinois, for New York seen her mother, she's become to two daughters.

When the novel opens, Ness, has been in the hospital to find that her mother, in a come all the way from the Midwest, is thrilled to see her, happily calls Lucy "Wizzle-dee," her sip from the town where I way I didn't remember, as words and observations have for years, and her voice was