2023 Coast to Coast

**September 14 – Charlene Carr**

*Synopsis:*

**For fans of Jodi Picoult, Kate Hewitt and Ashley Audrain, a heart-wrenching novel about two women whose eggs are switched during IVF**

Katherine is a woman full of obsessions. Everything clean, everything perfect, all the time. After seven years of trying—and failing—to conceive, she finally gives birth to Rose, her IVF miracle child. But she’s afraid that Rose may not be her daughter; her pale skin doesn’t match Katherine’s own.

Tess never got her happy ending. She took on IVF alongside Katherine and a group of hopeful mothers, but her daughter, Hanna, was stillborn. After a series of poor choices, she’s divorced, broke and stuck in a job that’s below her skill set.

Ten months later, Katherine and Tess get a call from the fertility clinic that reveals shocking news: the two women’s eggs were switched. While Katherine’s perfect life beings to crumble around her, for Tess it’s the glimmer of hope she needs to get her life back on track. But it will take a custody battle to decide who deserves to be Rose’s mother, a battle that will push both women to the brink.

With themes of racial identity, loss and betrayal, this emotional novel centred around a difficult moral question beautifully explores the complexities of motherhood.

*Bio:*

**CHARLENE CARR**lives in Nova Scotia with her husband and daughter. She has published nine novels and recently received grants from Arts Nova Scotia and the Canada Council for the Arts to write her next one.

**October 12 – Elyse Friedman**

Synopsis:

When Alana Shropshire’s seventy-six-year-old father, Ed, starts dating Kelly, a saucy twenty-eight-year-old, a flurry of messages arrive from Alana’s brothers, urging her to help “protect Dad” from the young interloper. Alana knows that what Teddy and Martin really want to protect is their father’s fortune, and she tells them she couldn’t care less about the May–December romance. Long estranged from her privileged family, Alana has no stake in the game, and as a hardworking single mom, she has more important things to worry about. But when Ed and Kelly’s wedding is announced, Teddy and Martin kick into hyperdrive, and eventually persuade Alana to fly to their father’s 900-acre West Coast island retreat to perform one small task in their plan to lure the “gold digger” away from their father. Kelly, however, proves a lot wilier than expected, and Alana becomes entangled in an increasingly dangerous scheme full of secrets and surprises. Will she be able to escape her brothers’ elaborate web of deceit? Just how far will her siblings go to retain control?

Smart, entertaining and brimming with shocking twists and turns, *The Opportunist* is both a thrill-ride of a story and a razor-sharp view of who wields power in the world.

**Bio:**

**ELYSE FRIEDMAN is a critically acclaimed author, screenwriter, poet and playwright. Her work has been shortlisted for the Trillium Book Award, the Toronto Book Award, the ReLit Award and the Tom Hendry Award. Her short story “The Soother” won the gold National Magazine Award for Fiction, and her poetry book *Know Your Monkey* won a ForeWord Book of the Year award. Her screenplay *Better Now* won the TIFF-CBC Films Screenwriter Award Jury Prize in 2019; her screenplay The *Relationship Experiment* won the TIFF-CBC Films Screenwriter Award in 2020. Elyse Friedman lives in Toronto.**

**November 9 – Sharon Frayne**

Author bio:

Sharon Frayne is a retired principal, artist and author. She is the 2021 winner of the Best YA/Juvenile Manuscript in the Muskoka Novel Marathon. Her writing has appeared in the *Eden Mills Writers Festival Chapter Publication*, *CommuterLit*, *Agnes and True*, *The Ekphrastic Review*, *Uproar*, *The Local* and *The Lake Report*. She spends her time in Niagara and Muskoka Lakes, Ontario with her family.

Long description:

Troubled, almost 16-year-old Raven Tantie just wants to be left alone, after her disastrous final performance in The Teen Talent show goes viral on social media. Worse, following a therapist’s advice, her divorcing parents send her to Rainbow Wings, an inclusive summer camp for the performing arts in Northern Ontario. Initially, Raven is angry at the world, but inside she’s desperate for acceptance and belonging. Campers with physical exceptionalities, learning disabilities, and complex neurodiversity are welcome at Rainbow Wings. Anxious and self-absorbed, Raven resists the charms of the quirky staff, the other campers, and the beautiful natural environment. When Ash, a camper with autism struggles to cope, her empathy for others begins to grow. Camp Director J. B., a former rock musician and professional clown, utilizes a philosophy of loving respect to help the campers. His estranged elderly mother lives in an abandoned wildlife sanctuary nearby, under threat from unscrupulous developers. When hard decisions have to be made, can Raven learn to use kindness and honesty to help new friends and herself? Because sometimes, when life deals hard problems, you can regain your confidence, and with trust and hope, build a better future.

**December 14 – Amanda Peters**

Bio:

AMANDA PETERS is the Globe & Mail and Toronto Star bestselling author of The Berry Pickers. A writer of Mi'kmaq and settler ancestry, her work has appeared in the *Antigonish Review*, *Grain Magazine*, the *Alaska Quarterly Review*, the *Dalhousie Review* and *Filling Station Magazine*. She is the winner of the 2021 Indigenous Voices Award for Unpublished Prose and a participant in the 2021 Writers' Trust Rising Stars program. A graduate of the Master of Fine Arts Program at the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) in Santa Fe, New Mexico, Amanda Peters has a Certificate in Creative Writing from the University of Toronto. She lives in the Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia, with her fur babies, Holly and Pook.

Book Description:

**NATIONAL BESTSELLER**

**A four-year-old girl goes missing from the blueberry fields of Maine, sparking a tragic mystery that remains unsolved for nearly fifty years**

July 1962. A Mi’kmaq family from Nova Scotia arrives in Maine to pick blueberries for the summer. Weeks later, four-year-old Ruthie, the family’s youngest child, is seen sitting on her favourite rock at the edge of a field before mysteriously vanishing. Her six-year-old brother, Joe, who was the last person to see Ruthie, is devastated by his sister’s disappearance, and her loss ripples through his life for years to come.

In Maine, a young girl named Norma grows up as an only child in an affluent family. Her father is emotionally distant, while her mother is overprotective of Norma, who is often troubled by recurring dreams and visions that seem to be too real to be her imagination. As she grows older, Norma senses there is something her parents aren’t telling her. Unwilling to abandon her intuition, she pursues her family’s secret for decades.

A stunning debut novel,*The Berry Pickers* is a riveting story about the search for truth, the shadow of trauma, and the persistence of love across time.