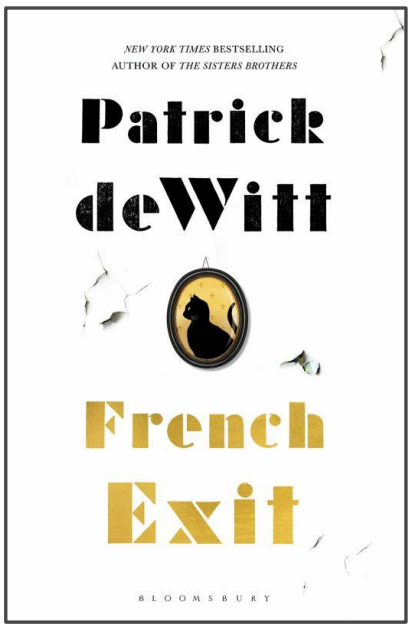
RIVERBEND STANDING ORDERS

SEPTEMBER SELECTIONS 2018 | ADULT FICTION



French Exit
By: Patrick deWitt
Published by: Bloomsbury PLC
ISBN: 9781526601186
Price: $29.99

THE BOOK

From bestselling author Patrick deWitt, a brilliant and darkly comic novel about a wealthy widow and her adult son who flee New York for Paris in the wake of scandal and financial disintegration. Frances Price-tart widow, possessive mother, and Upper East Side force of nature-is in dire straits, beset by scandal and impending bankruptcy. Her adult son Malcolm is no help, mired in a permanent state of arrested development. And then there's the Price's aging cat, Small Frank, who Frances believes houses the spirit of her late husband, an infamously immoral litigator and world-class cad whose gruesome tabloid death rendered Frances and Malcolm social outcasts.

Putting penury and pariahdom behind them, the family decides to cut their losses and head for the exit. One ocean voyage later, the curious trio land in their beloved Paris, the City of Light serving as a backdrop not for love or romance, but self-destruction and economic ruin-to riotous effect. A number of singular characters serve to round out the cast: a bashful private investigator, an aimless psychic proposing a seance, and a doctor who makes house calls with his wine merchant in tow, to name a few. Brimming with pathos, French Exit is a one-of-a-kind "tragedy of manners," a send-up of high society, as well as a moving mother-son caper which only Patrick deWitt could conceive and execute.

WHY WE CHOSE THIS BOOK

Best known for his Man Booker nominated *The Sisters Brothers*, a darkly comic Western, Patrick deWitt has made a name for himself as an author who loves to play with the limits of genre. In the French Exit, he turns his hand to creating a (tragi-)comedy of manners for the modern age, skewering high society with his trademark wit. Socialite Frances and her adult son Malcolm are ludicrously self-absorbed to the point of hilarity, yet still draw empathy from the reader. This is the mark of a writer of great talent: deWitt delivers a thoroughly enjoyable romp with an edge of biting satire. This stylish novel and its eccentric characters leap off the page and we can see it being effortlessly transformed into a film in the near future.