Books for the randoms on your gift list

Gifts for close family members and friends are easy to buy
But what about that weird cousin you haven’t seen in three years?
Or your brother’s latest flame?
There’s a book out there for every question mark on your Christmas list

For the aunt who loves animals
‘The Big New Yorker Book of Dogs’
Foreword by Malcolm Gladwell
This excellent, handsome and hefty compendium of all things canine (cartoons, essays, poems, humor pieces and more) is culled from the famed magazine’s archives.

The nature-loving father-in-law
‘Bird Watcher’s Bible: A Complete Treasury’
Edited by Jonathan Alderfer
Even for nonbirders, the “Bird Watcher’s Bible” is a surprisingly readable and interesting collection of interesting bird facts, how-to hints, folklore and history. The beautiful illustrations are a treat to gaze upon.

Your brother’s new girlfriend
‘The Twelve Tribes of Hattie’
by Ayana Mathis
Don’t know anything about this strange newbie who will be attending Christmas dinner with your family? Don’t despair: “The Twelve Tribes of Hattie” is Oprah’s new book club book, meaning it’s a book she’ll be familiar with — after all, everyone knows Oprah. (And if she doesn’t, there’s a problem.)

That one cousin you know nothing about
‘The Chinese Takeout Cookbook’
By Diana Kuan
Everyone eats Chinese food. But you can’t wrap up a pint of General Tso’s and put it under a tree, can you? “The Chinese Takeout Book” is full of simple recipes that anyone can whip up, even if you’re unsure of your cousin’s cooking ability — or name.

The fun mother-in-law
‘The Cursing Mommy’s Book of Days’
by Ian Frazier
This hilarious “diary” written in the voice of a frazzled, 20-something woman, known as the Cursing Mommy, will be an apt gift for any family member who has a sense of humor — or a slight cursing problem.