here's a parlor game that sophisticated New Yorkers have been playing since the Gilded Age: What are the city’s best apartment buildings? Before the turn of the twentieth century, the Dakota was an obvious answer; by the 1920s the list had grown to include McKim, Mead & White’s Renaissance-style 998 Fifth Avenue and Starrett & Van Vleck’s ultra-soigné 820 Fifth Avenue. The Roaring Twenties witnessed the construction of some of the most luxurious apartment buildings ever designed: Rosario Candela’s extraordinary One Sutton Place South, 720, 740, and 778 Park Avenue, and 960 and 834 Fifth Avenue; Emery Roth’s monumental Beresford; and William Lawrence Bottomley’s Art Deco-inspired River House. Now, more than 130 years after the Dakota’s cornerstone was laid, the New York skyline features numerous new palatial residential buildings, including Richard Meier’s glass-walled Perry Street towers, Robert A. M. Stern’s 15 Central Park West, and Rafael Viñoly’s 432 Park Avenue, the city’s tallest apartment building to date.

In a new book, *Life at the Top: New York’s Most Exceptional Apartment Buildings*, Kirk Henckels and Anne Walker, real estate and architectural insiders, chronicle the fortunes and features of fifteen outstanding apartment houses, bringing them to life with evocative vintage photos of exterior and interior architectural details, as well as photographs of chic New Yorkers at home in their elegant abodes by the likes of Beaton and Horst. Accompanied by Michel Arnaud’s expressive photographs and newly commissioned floor plans, Henckels and Walker tour some of the most beautiful apartments in these buildings as they look today, designed
by the talented hands of Henri Samuel, Robert Couturier, Piet Boon, Michael S. Smith, Nathalie and Virginie Droulers, George Yabu and Glenn Pushelberg, William Sofield, Thomas Jayne, Charles Pavarini, Joe Nahem, Bunny Williams, Cullman & Kravis, Delphine Krakoff, Katie Ridder, Tom Scheerer, and others.

From River House’s lawn overlooking the East River to 834 Fifth Avenue’s unrivaled view of Central Park, this is an insider’s look at life at the top.

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by Kirk Henckels and Anne Walker
Photography by Michel Arnaud
Hardcover with jacket
More than 300 color and black-and-white illustrations
15 specially commissioned floor plans
320 pages, 9 ⅞ x 12 inches
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