



# BiblioFiles

By Ruth Freeman

Readers' Advisor @ the Rowayton Library

## October 2008

Fall is always a great time to get serious about books; cooler weather means evenings in front of the fire aren't too far away. Nothing is more comforting than a big stack of unread books beside your favorite chair. Let's review our new favorites and create a good mix for your biblio pile.

As ever, mysteries are some of our favorites. Ian Rankin "retires" Inspector Rebus in his new book 'Exit Music'. That last sentence was not a spoiler; the news is publicized up front. I used quotes around any idea of Rebus's retirement because by the time you have gotten to the end of this wonderful romp through the murderous worlds of the Russian oligarchy, Edinburgh hoods, shifty politicians and the police who chase them down you cannot imagine a world without Rebus's wry take on human and criminal nature. The book's background feels very modern in light of the increasingly global reach of business and investment and the pressure municipalities are under to find funds and create jobs. Ethical compromises are debated and choices made, not always wisely. At the conclusion of the mystery you think surely he could be at least be a consultant on his team's next case...

'All the Colors of Darkness' by Peter Robinson brings back Inspector Alan Banks. This won't be published in the U.S. until next February but we have a copy thanks to a European vacation purchase. Shakespeare's 'Othello' is the basis of the plot which also intertwines shady and nasty dealings by MI6 - the British Secret Service. It's a complicated story line but that is the fun of getting pulled into the machinations of a small regional theater troupe with jealousies and ambition roiling the waters. There are plenty of murder victims and suspects to go around, and with the exception of an irritating girlfriend Inspector Banks surrounds himself with his usual capable and smart team.

'The Brass Verdict' by Michael Connelly has been eagerly awaited and with good reason. Micky Haller from 'The Lincoln Lawyer' teams up with Detective Harry Bosch in this highly readable mystery with enough twists to keep you burning the midnight oil as you race to the conclusion. The dialogue is superb; Connelly has always been a master of the cynical observation and Haller and Bosch play off each other very well.

'The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo' by Steig Larsson is exceptionally gripping. The character development is some of the best we've seen and the Swedish setting gives an exotic tinge to



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this tale of financial corruption, murder and betrayal. The journalist hero Blomkvist is hired to solve the “cold case” of the disappearance of a financier’s niece 40 years earlier. His eventual sidekick is the girl with the tattoos and high level computer skills. The ghosts of family actions in WWII and beyond lend texture and tension, and the ancillary characters are fleshed out realistically. This is an unusual thriller in every sense of the word. The author was a journalist (sadly he died before the book was published) and clearly his experiences are the basis for the realistic setting of the magazine where Blomkvist works. It’s easy to get immersed in the suspenseful world Larsson created; you can’t turn the pages fast enough.

There are two new books ostensibly written for children that we know would be enjoyed by all ages. ‘The 2nd International Cookbook for Kids’ by Matthew Locricchio is another hit, specializing in the cuisines of Brazil, Thailand and Greece. Like his first ‘International Cookbook for Kids’ the simple but flavorful recipes are accessible and beautifully illustrated, with delectable results for adults and children alike to enjoy. There are really good technique lessons as well and his infectious enthusiasm will make accomplished cooks out of everyone in your house. This book is guaranteed to perk up your dinner table!

‘Our White House, Looking In, Looking Out’ is by over 100 authors and illustrators introduced by David McCullough. It’s a charming and thoughtful compilation of color pictures and stories about the White House over the years. Given pre election interest in Washington D.C. and our government, this is a great way to introduce children to the excitement of history as it was lived in the Executive Mansion. Everyone will learn something they didn’t know about the Americans represented here. There are fascinating details and funny stories. We can’t recommend this highly enough.

This grab bag should have something for everyone, and if it doesn’t come visit and we’ll find you a book that suits!

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