



BiblioFiles

By Ruth Freeman

Readers' Advisor @ the Rowayton Library

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As the days get shorter potential reading time gets longer! Enjoy these suggestions or come by the library to peruse the shelves.

'Death Wore White' by Jim Kelly introduces Peter Shaw and George Valentine, a pair of coppers in Norfolk, UK. The unusual setting of the "perfect murder" is a line of cars trapped by a coastal blizzard that wipes out prints, bedevils forensic experts due to melting evidence etc. A back story nicely integrates an earlier child murder case that involved one of the current partners and the father of the other. There is lots of good character development, a satisfying slew of suspects and a crackerjack ending. We hope to see more of this duo.

'The Silent Hour' by Michael Koryta is the fourth Lincoln Perry outing. Perry is a Cleveland, OH based private investigator whose reputation has led Parker Harrison to his door. Harrison is a paroled criminal who spent time in a bucolic half way house run by Alexandra and Joshua Cantrell. Their disappearance and the subsequent discovery of a body lead Perry into a world of gangsters, the promise versus reality of redemption, and his efforts to reconcile his violent profession with his desire to protect his girlfriend and partner. There is lots of taut dialogue, and while the book takes a long time to reach its conclusion you are pulled along, a witness to the repercussions of the unwinding of a tragic but well meaning enterprise.

'Wedding Season' by Katie Fforde is a trifle but tons of fun. Fforde is known for her sense of humor and happily ever after endings. Pure escapism and lots of juicy inside scoop on the wedding planning business make this a good lark. The trio of friends who struggle to make everything come out right for brides at the expense of their happiness at last get their fairy tales to come true.

'An Expensive Education' by Nick McDonnell features Michael Teak as a young, Harvard educated American agent trying to puzzle out who is and isn't expendable in this spy novel from the headlines. McDonnell is only 25, which could be why the parts of the book set at Harvard feel more authentic. The opening scene is in a small African village where Teak has come to meet with a rebel leader and deliver money. A missile strike destroys the village when he is leaving, setting in motion multiple plot lines that involve ties between Harvard and Africa. It's a quick, diverting read.



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'Brooklyn' by Colm Tobin is a beautifully written novel about the joys and costs of being exiled from home. Eilis Lacey emigrates from Ireland to Brooklyn in the 1950's thanks to the intervention of her older sister Rose, who wants one of them to have a chance to leave their small town. Brooklyn at this time is beautifully brought to life, with Eilis' tentative steps toward independence nicely described. Tobin is a true craftsman; the descriptions are remarkable. Saying anymore would spoil the subtle plot developments that lead to an ending that stays with you.

'My Soul to Take' by Yrsa Sigurdardottir is terrific. The setting in rural Iceland creates a fascinating atmosphere. The novel starts in 1946 with a chilling murder, then flashes forward quickly to today when there is another grisly murder. The heroine is Thora Gudmundsdóttir, a lawyer/amateur sleuth who is staying in a coastal hotel, having been asked to look into its purported haunting. Thora starts digging into the site's past and becomes submerged in stories of ghosts, possible incest, sibling rivalries and all kinds of melancholy doings, including the formation of the Icelandic Nazi Party. Her paramour Michael arrives to provide touches of humor to the proceedings, and like a good Agatha Christie whodunit the hotel is wonderfully loaded with suspects. A very strong sense of place makes this more than a mystery.

The library is hosting a book talk on Nov. 10th on 'My Life in France', Julia Child's charming memoir of her early days in France and Europe with her husband Paul. Our discussion leader will be Judy Sullivan; the program is made possible in part by a grant from the CT Humanities Council. Multiple copies of the book are available. Julia's sense of humor really comes through and even if you have seen the movie 'Julie and Julia' there is much to be discovered between these pages. One of our favorites, and we are serving a light lunch in case reading it makes you hungry!

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