



BiblioFiles

By Ruth Freeman

Readers' Advisor @ the Rowayton Library

April 2011 - Come browse and have a spring fling with a good book!

'Frozen Assets' is by Quentin Bates, a former resident of Iceland who brings that expertise to bear on the plot and setting. Wonderfully descriptive, it's set in the small Icelandic town of Havlvik and features a police sergeant named Dunna and her cohorts. A very topical plot set during the recent financial meltdown that tanked Iceland gives the book a gritty realism. Great, believable characters move the story along. The combination of big business machinations and murderous intrigue make this a good addition to the Scandinavian noir genre.

'The Saturday Big Tent Wedding Party' is the latest installment of Alexander McCall Smith's No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency series. It concludes many of the long running story lines from the previous books which make for nice resolutions. Precious Ramotswe, as wise and charming as ever, continues to solve cases that as often as not require a warm heart rather than a nose for crime. Botswana continues to shine as the backdrop for the series.

'The Lost Sister' by Russell D. Mclean is set in Dundee, a grey and dour Scottish city. Private Investigator McNee is roped into the search for a missing fourteen year old girl, who happens to be the goddaughter of his nemesis. Formerly a police officer, he has to navigate the slippery slope of investigating without real authority. The chapters are short and the dialogue is on the curt side, but the pace is fast and the characters are interesting.

'Salt Marsh Diary' is by Mark Lender, a Connecticut author who writes poetically about living on the edge of a salt marsh. This is a great book for the Farm Creek enthusiasts in town! Observations of ospreys, egrets, geese, and fox et al. will sound familiar. Each chapter is devoted to a denizen of his tidal marsh. His writing is terrific.

'The School of Night' by Louis Bayard is an intriguing mystery set both in the present day and in Elizabethan England. Witty dialogue and a challenging mystery wrapped in a bit of time travel make this a really enjoyable read.



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'The Reversal' by Michael Connelly is the latest installment in the Micky Haller Lincoln lawyer series. It revolves around a timely plot line involving the foreclosure crisis in CA. Haller and his team are representing Lisa Tramell, a single mother accused of murdering a banker. I think courtroom dramas can be pedestrian, but in Connelly's hands the DA and defense team strategies and plot twists and turns keep the action moving briskly.

'The Informant' by Thomas Perry marks the welcome return of the Butcher's Boy. Perry is a very skilled developer of believable high stakes action plots; it's fun to watch a master at work. His main character – an assassin for hire – is pitted against a wily Federal agent and literally hundreds of people who want him dead. It's very suspenseful and hard to put down. Perry is an excellent storyteller.

'How to Eat A Small Country' by Amy Finley is an engaging memoir of essentially saving a family life through meals during a six month sojourn in rural France. The author won the "Be the Next Food Network Star" chef contest and gained a measure of fame but almost lost her husband along the way. Humor and patience save the day; this is a good one for armchair travelers.

'Salad As a Meal' is Patricia Wells' timely opus covering main dish salads and the sides that go with them. It is lavishly photographed and full of beautiful and tasty dishes for all seasons. This is a perfect book to check out before the farmers market opens. Her prose is stylish yet approachable and the recipes really work.

'My Father's Daughter' by Gwyneth Paltrow was a pleasant surprise. I was a bit skeptical since she is a movie star, not a chef, but there are a number of appetizing, simple, healthy recipes in this book. For those of you who haven't made kale chips yet, check it out!

'Weird Sisters' by Eleanor Brown is a terrific read by a first time author. This is the story of the three adult Dandreas sisters, back home in Ohio after various misadventures while their mother battles breast cancer. The family, whose father is a Shakespeare professor at the local college, often use snippets of Shakespeare to communicate. It's a different and engaging style, perfect for Shakespeare on the Sound fans. ###