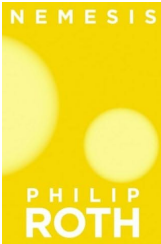


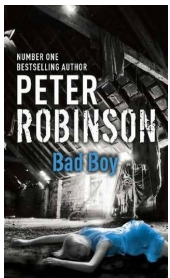
Book Club Fall

Philip Roth—Nemesis



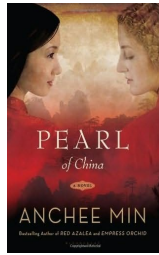
Roth writes with a deep and convincing manner about the dark questions and choices that shape our lives. We are far removed from the effects of an epidemic outbreak of polio – perhaps a grandparent may have been affected but for us the threat is gone. This book revolves around the fear associated with the war-time epidemic and the effects it has on a Newark community and its children. The protagonist is a young director of the children’s playground and we feel with him as he goes through all the stages of emotion, fear, anger, panic and pain as the disease attacks his young charges. Roth is the type of writer who can truly depict and explore deep and dark emotions. Once you have read this book, you may well want to read some of his others... *Everyman*, *Indignation* and *The Humbling*. Stark, simple titles belie the intense struggles within each book.

Peter Robinson—Bad Boy



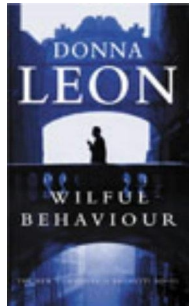
Another Inspector Banks novel that leads us into a very seedy part of British life, drug lords, their dealers, other minions and thugs. What is disturbing is that his daughter becomes involved in a very integral part of this novel. We are caught up in her connection to a dealer who has manipulated her and then held her hostage once he realizes who her father is and his role in the police system. This is a substantial detective/mystery story by a good Canadian author. His handling of the characters and the plot will lead one to go back and read his other crime novels.

Anchee Man—Pearl of China



A beautiful story of friendship and devotion of two young women growing up and bonding in a way that we can only imagine a true friendship can be. A young peasant Chinese girl becomes friends with the daughter of a zealous American missionary in China. We learn that this young American girl is the famous writer Pearl Buck. Their aspirations and their intellectual capacity become that inextricable bond as they build lives sometimes connected sometimes oceans apart. The story brings to life a very deeply moving portrayal of Pearl Buck as a champion and lover of the Chinese people. The ending is moving, gracious and poignant. A wonderful novel.

Donna Leon—Willful Behaviour



A Commissario Guido Brunetti mystery by the skillful and literary mystery writer, Donna Leon. Her detailed descriptions of Venice make the reader feel as if they are part of the whole experience, the life, the people and the investigation. In this book, Claudia, one of Brunetti’s wife’s students comes to him for help to investigate and obtain a pardon for a crime her now dead grandfather had committed. When Claudia is found murdered, Brunetti’s interest is piqued and he starts to trace the other people in her life. In particular, he makes a connection to an elderly woman who was a former lover of Claudia’s grandfather. Although she lives very modestly, she has an extremely valuable and extraordinary art collection in her home. When she is also murdered, the investigation escalates and many hidden secrets are uncovered. This is not a fast read like some other crime novels but it is a rich read with moments of intrigue and suspense created that carry the reader along to the end.

Emma Donoghue The Room



An unusual, seemingly simplistic writing style forces the reader to explore depths of emotion that focus on the life of the child and the mother in the room. Hard to imagine how the child in his innocence can survive in the eleven by eleven foot space but we understand the love and devotion of his mother that contain him there. The book is unlike anything you have ever read. Truly, as Michael Cunningham says, “an entirely original work of art.”

Rose's
Thursday Night
Book Club

Fall Reading
Suggestions



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LIBRARY

519.925.2168

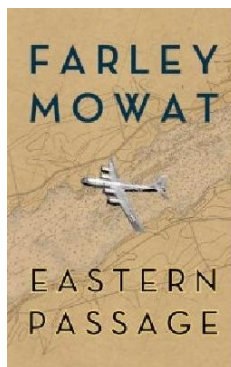
Marina Nemat—
After Tehran: A Life Reclaimed



This is a true story of courage and strength that follows Nemat's story in *Prisoner of Tehran* when as a young girl of 16 she was tortured and imprisoned in the Evin prison in Iran. As she leaves prison, she is still faced with a very repressive life, a family that is distant and seemingly uncaring about her situation and the political regime that imprisoned her in

the first place. This second book deals with her escape to Canada with her husband and infant son. She works at fast food restaurants to help support the family as they raise their two children. However, she is haunted by a post-traumatic stress with flashbacks and emotions that increasingly overwhelm her. As she confronts these feelings and also as she becomes more well-known through her writings she feels part of her redemption must involve honesty about aspects of her previous life that she had not revealed to her family or her husband. Her journey is heartbreaking, emotional but at the same time uplifting. Truly a must read to understand the lives so many of our new immigrants are struggling through. She tells the story in a compelling, emotional and powerful way that captivates our interest and our compassion.

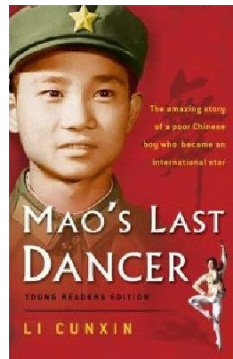
Farley Mowat—Eastern Passage



Another true Canadian historical adventure told as only Farley Mowat can tell with his intimate knowledge of the country and his insatiable quest for adventure. Throughout his writing career, Mowat has been a controversial activist exploring both primitive and current communities. This book is the second part of his memoir. The first was *Otherwise*, while this book covers the time of his life from 1937 to 1954

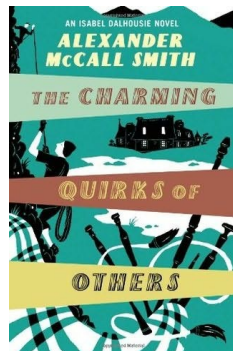
omitting the Second World War. He makes no apologies for retelling certain aspects of his life because they are part of the essence of what brought him into writing and what carried him into the established reputation as one of Canada's most famous raconteurs. It is a story for all ages and all time.

Li Cunxin—Mao's Last Dance



A profoundly moving and gripping story! The story told by the author moves us with the compassion he feels for everyone on his journey from the life of a very poor sixth son in a peasant family in the harsh times of the Mao communist regime to that of a principal dancer in the Houston Ballet winning international medals and international acclaim. This compassion comes out as time and again despite the adversity he meets, he deals with strong conviction and courage yet still understanding why others place him in these difficult situations. We are caught up in his simple yet emotional retelling of his life story; the incredible hardships he and his family face when as a boy of eleven he accepts an opportunity to train under extremely rigorous and difficult circumstances, is afforded an opportunity to travel to the US and eventually defects. Every step of the way is fascinating and emotionally captivating. The depiction of his life as it interweaves with Chinese-US relations and the dissolution of the Communist ideal he experiences in a deep and personal way create an awareness in us of a society that is very far removed from our own. This book would captivate a wide audience with its honesty, reality and the depiction of the ultimate strength of the human spirit.

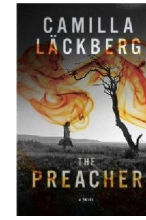
Alexander McCall Smith —
The Charming Quirks of Others



What can one say? If you are a fan of the Isabel Dalhousie series, then here is another equally entertaining one. What fun! Not only is Isabel given the job to delve into the lives of others, at the same time she finds some interesting insights into her own character. Checking out the backgrounds of the short-listed candidates for the headmaster's job at a local school becomes her latest challenge. She ends up not only discovering information about the candidates but also surprisingly finds out things about Jamie, the father of her son. She uncovers a depth of emotions and we are once again impressed by McCall Smith's understanding and depiction of the quirks of human nature.

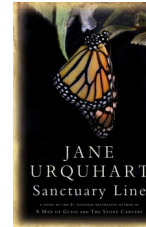


Camilla Läckberg—The Preacher



The success of Stieg Larsen's books were certainly the catalyst for me to explore this Scandinavian author's works. However, Lackberg is Sweden's No.1 bestselling author. Again a crime/mystery genre, the book features local detective Patrik Hedström who is woken from his sleep by the early morning discovery of a woman's body. The remains of two young vacationers missing for 20 years are found along with those of this new victim, a young woman. Suspicion is cast on a local family clan of misfits, religious fanatics and criminals and time to discover the murderers is running short as a second young woman goes missing. The book is textually heavy and it brings opportunities to compare translations. Anyone who reads Henning Mankell's books will note that the translator for this book is Steven T. Murray who also translates Mankell's works. The author also has 2 other books set in the same village and involving the same characters, Patrik and his girlfriend Erica. Worth checking out but not a fast read.

Jane Urquhart- Sanctuary Line



Another exquisite, multi-layered novel by one of our greatest Canadian writers. While it is set in current times on a farm on the shores of Lake Erie, Urquhart weaves the life of Liz Crane an entomologist into the historical fabric of the past in Ireland and Ontario. Every page is crafted with language, phrases and visual pictures that bring you into the heart of the landscape and the story. Both intermingled in a way that draw you in and make you feel intensely part of the story. Liz takes over her cousin's old house as she takes on a position at the Sanctuary Research Centre to study the migratory patterns of the Monarch Butterfly. Her life in the old farm house brings her to confront and explore her family's history, the disappearance of an Uncle, her cousin Amanda's father. Amanda had been killed in Afghanistan on a tour of duty. It is this tragedy that becomes a catalyst for the exploration of Amanda's life and the Butler family history. A life built around the old orchard, secret love affairs and hidden tragedies. At the same time, Liz's own life is very isolated and haunted by these family shadows. At the end, mysteries are revealed and the poignancy and heartbreak of those times surface again as we the reader deeply feel the intense emotional impact.