



March 2020 Good Reads Book Club

We've changed our June date (thank you for accommodating me!) and our June meeting will now take place on **Thursday, June 11**.

For our March book club, we read *As Long As We Both Shall Live* by JoAnn Chaney. It was one that I recommended based on the strength of the reviews, but I hadn't "pre-read" it so I wasn't sure if it would be good. But we all agreed that it was great! Several of us have recommended the book to other people, even to the library staff. JoAnn summed it up when she said "I thought I knew what it was going to be... but I was wrong." Just a fun read.

For April we will read *The Whistling Season* by Ivan Doig. It's a much slower-paced book than *As Long As We Both Shall Live*, and has a similar feel to *Plainsong* by Kent Haruf or maybe *Virgil Wander* by Leif Enger (in my opinion). I hope you enjoy it but if you can't get into it, not to worry, just set it aside and pick up something else. Life's too short to read books you don't like!

JoAnn read:

Professor Chandra Follows His Bliss. A 68-year old professor takes stock of his life and realizes his kids don't talk to him and he's not happy. He tries to find things that make him happy. Not a great ending - basically, "work isn't everything" which we kind of already know. Not recommended.

The Museum of Desire by Jonathan Kellerman. A continuation of the Alex Delaware / Det. Sturgis series. A psychological thriller. It starts with four dead people in a car. They have no reason to know each other and no reason why they should all end up murdered in the same car. So what's the story? How are they connected? (JoAnn will never tell. You'll have to read it yourself.)

House on Fire by Joseph Finder. Nick's old army buddy ODs on heroin, and at the funeral, Nick is approached by someone who suggests this may not have been an accident.... Investigation and some mayhem ensue.

The Passenger by John Marrs. Eight individuals are sentenced to death when a hacker takes over the controls of their self-driving cars and announces to them that within 2 hours they'll be dead. "It was super, super, super bad. Angie will love it!"

Into the Fire by Gregg Hurwitz. The latest in the Orphan X series, and it's a good read.

Irene read:

Three Hours in Paris by Cara Black. A standalone novel by the author of the Aimee LeDuc mystery series, this takes place in Paris during World War II. An American sharpshooter is smuggled into Paris and her job is to assassinate Hitler. A good read, and very entertaining.



House on Endless Waters by Emuna Elon. In present-day Amsterdam, a well-known author researches his mother's history and what happened to her during World War II. The format of the book was confusing, as it kept changing viewpoints. Even within each chapter, there'd be a present-day paragraph and then a paragraph written in his mother's past. Irene liked it, but you really had to pay attention to what you were reading.

Margaret read:

Tomorrow There Will Be Apricots by Jessica Soffer. A great story about family, love, and how food is central to both. The protagonist is a young girl whose mother is a well-known chef.

Better by Amy Robach. Nonfiction memoir by the TV personality who was diagnosed with breast cancer after she had a mammogram on-air, six years ago. It's an honest look at her struggles and her story. Now, years later, she is alive and healthy. Margaret said it is an amazing book.

Charity read:

Chilling Effect by Valerie Valdez. Science fiction. "Kidnappers. Alien emperors. Psychic cats. AND she's out of coffee." Charity enjoyed it, but it's not something she thinks anyone else (except Mary and Angie, maybe) would enjoy.

Becky read:

The Guardians by John Grisham. Enjoyed it.

Bitterroots by C. J. Box. This was a standalone, and Becky didn't care for it.

Night Fire by Michael Connelly. Becky was so annoyed at the stuff Harry Bosch pulled in this book that she says she'll never read another Connelly.

House on Fire by Joseph Finder - enjoyed it

The Hating Game by Sally Thorne. A fun read (chick-lit)

When You See Me by Lisa Gardner. Good.

The Silent Patient by Alex Michaelides. Becky loved it. Dottie said she had also enjoyed it quite a lot, while Irene said she'd tried to read it several times but couldn't get into it.

Into the Fire by Gregg Hurwitz. Enjoyed it.

Pat read:

The Deserter by Nelson DeMille. A special forces captain in Afghanistan goes AWOL and is captured by the enemy. Then how does he end up in Argentina several years later? The writing is so suspenseful and DeMille is a great writer. Loved this one.



The Dutch House by Ann Patchett. Pat enjoyed this book. (Angie and Mary, who'd also read it, said they didn't really care for it.)

Angie read:

Tideland by Philippa Gregory. Historical fiction set in England in the 1600s. A poor healer woman whose husband has deserted her tries to survive in the close-minded town where she lives. Her neighbors need her help but also fear her. A lot of drama, but an enjoyable read, and Angie would recommend it.

Rachel read:

The Reluctant Fundamentalist by Mohsin Hamid. The book was very strange, and Rachel couldn't quite figure out what was going on. And the ending was pretty ambiguous, left you hanging. Rachel doesn't recommend it (but Mary and Charity previously read it and both enjoyed it). To each their own!

Dottie read:

A Nearly Normal Family by M. T. Edvarsson. A seemingly close-knit family is rocked when the eighteen-year-old daughter is accused of the murder of an older man she's been seeing on the sly. Her father is a pastor and her mother is a lawyer. The book has three narratives, first from the perspective of the father, then the girl, and finally the mother. "What would you do to protect your kids?"

A Spark of Joy by Jodi Picoult. This had been recommended by Marianne a few months ago. It was a thought-provoking book that is set at a reproductive health clinic. The book starts at the end of the story and every chapter is one hour in the past. Becky agreed with Dottie that Picoult's books always make you think. Mary and Rachel, meanwhile, are still holding grudges against Picoult for the way her first bestseller - *My Sister's Keeper* - ended (it was published in 2004). "As God is my witness, I will NEVER read another book by Picoult," Mary vowed at the time. And she's held that grudge for twenty-six years.

Kingdomtide by Rye Curtis. This was another one that Marianne recommended. A seventy-two year old woman survives a plane crash in a remote area. The story is told in alternating perspectives between her and the park ranger who's trying to find her. Dottie enjoyed it.

Mary read:

Akin by Emma Donoghue. This was the selection of the Mount Tabor book club and after the librarian assured Mary that it is not as creepy as her earlier book *Room*, Mary decided to give it a shot. It was pretty good. It's going to be one of our book club books later this year.

The Good Killer by Harry Dolan. Iraqi war veteran Sean Tennant and his girlfriend Molly have managed to stay off the grid for years, but when Sean saves people at the mall from a mass shooter, his face pops up in the news, and suddenly, he and Molly are on the run from some very,



very bad people. The book got great reviews but it was too violent for Mary, so she gave it to the more bloodthirsty Becky to read.



February 2020 Good Reads Book Club

The book we read for this meeting was *Other People's Houses* by Abby Waxman. Although no one absolutely hated it, several of us thought it was just "ehhh" or no big deal. She's a good writer and it was fast-paced, and some of it was funny, but there were a lot of characters and some of us found it hard to follow. For next month we'll read *As Long As We Both Shall Live* by Jo Anne Chaney.

JoAnn read:

The River Murders by James Born (a frequent co-writer with James Patterson). Very non-believable, and very badly written.

The Hard Ticket Home by David Housewright. A fun thriller featuring a private investigator who is hired to find the missing sister of a girl who needs a bone marrow transplant (because the sister is a donor match).

The Confession Club by Elizabeth Berg. A group of women confess their sins to each other. It's a good story, Jo Ann liked it.

You've Been Volunteered by Lori Gelman. Not one of Jo Ann's favorite reads, but the snarky emails written by the protagonist were fun to read.

A Minute to Midnight by David Baldacci. The 2nd in his series featuring female FBI agent Atlee Pine. Very good.

Night Fire by Michael Connelly. It was okay, not his best work.

What Red Was by Rosie Price. An excellent, really good story, and well-written.

Hindsight by Iris Johansen. A woman who was once blind but is now able to see, uses her powers of observation to help in an investigation.

The Deserter by Nelson DeMille. A really superior read; highly recommended. A good story and a great ending. Unputdownable!

Marianne read

A Spark of Light by Jodi Picoult, set in a women's reproductive clinic. A good story.

Goodnight from London by Jennifer Robson. Another great piece of historical fiction from the author of *The Gown*. Marianne liked *The Gown* better, but this was good too. It's set in England during World War II and the main character is a young American reporter who is stationed there.

Dear George, Dear Mary by Mary Calvi (who is a news anchor on Channel 2). This is an enjoyable, wonderful piece of historical fiction about the love life of a young George Washington.



The Silent Patient by Alex Michaelides. An interesting story, it was an ok read

The Summer Before the War by Helen Simonson. This was recently read by the Montville book club, and the consensus of their group (which Marianne agreed with) was "Don't bother--" it's not worth the time.

The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah. An excellent story.

The Girl They Left Behind by Roxanne Veletzos. A fabulous story, an excellent book about what it was like in Romania after World War 2. Sad and eye-opening.

Cilka's Journey by Heather Morris. This nonfiction book is by the author of *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*. It's quite a story, and it is hard to read about what people went through.

Sold on a Monday by Kristina McMorris - a very good story

The Women in the Castle by Jessica Shattuck. This was an interesting read about the lives of three women whose husbands were executed for trying to assassinate Hitler. It focuses on what their lives were like after the war. Strong female characters.

Dottie read:

The Stationery Shop by Marjan Kamali. Everyone in the book club who's read it has liked it very much. A good book, but sad.

The Reckless Oath We Made by Bryn Greenwood. The book is about two misfit kids: Zee, a girl, and Gentry, a boy who is on the spectrum (high-functioning) and believes his job is to protect Zee like a knight in shining armor. Dottie is still not quite sure if she liked the book.

Last Hope Island by Lynne Olsen. Nonfiction about what England was like during World War 2 and how expatriates from occupied countries helped so much with the war effort.

Rachel read:

Red War by Kyle Mills - the latest in the Mitch Rapp series. Unfortunately Rachel did not like this one very much

The Wife Between Us by Greer Hendricks and Sarah Pekkanen. Very good.

An Anonymous Girl (also by Greer Hendricks and Sarah Pekkanen) - a very good psychological thriller.

House of Gold by Natasha Solomons - Enjoyable.

Angie read:

After the Flood by Cassandra Montag. A post-apocalyptic book of survival, set in the near-distant future. Angie thought it was an interesting story and recommended it to Mary.



Queen Bee by Dorothea Benton Frank. "Let's not even go there." Angie was not a fan.

Guess Who by Chris McGeorge. An excellent thriller set in London that caught Angie's attention because of the blurb on the front: "One room. Five suspects. Three hours to find a killer." It kept her on the edge of her seat. Highly recommended.

Pat read:

Blue Moon by Lee Child. Didn't like it - it seems like the books are getting to be all the same and too predictable.

Night Fire by Michael Connelly - the latest Bosch book

Redemption by David Baldacci, featuring Detective Amos Decker. A very good thriller.

Bloody Genius by John Sandford - another great book featuring Virgil Flowers, loved it.

How the Dead Speak by Val McDermid. Usually Pat likes her books, but not this one - she didn't like any of the characters.

Irene read

A Better Man, the new Louise Penny. It was one of the better ones in the series, very good.

The Christmas Boutique by Jennifer Chiaverini - one of the Elm Creek Quilt series

Blood on Snow by Jo Nesbo. The main character is a hit man. A very weird read, involving a love affair with a deaf mute.

Criss Cross by Patterson. The latest Alex Cross. Terrible.

Pandora's Room by Christopher Golden. An archaeological dig in Turkey. A typical adventure thriller.

Who Let the Dogs Out by David Rosenfelt- one of the Andy Carpenter mysteries

Mary read

You Can Only Yell At Me For One Thing At A Time: Rules for Couples by Patricia Marx and Roz Chast

Goodnight from London by Jennifer Robson

The Royal We by Heather Cocks

Dear Edward by Ann Napolitano