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### January 2023 Good Reads Book Club

For this month's book club, we read *The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* by Robert Dugoni. It was a heartwarming read, and everybody liked it. Several of us had already read it. A good story, engaging, and checked all the boxes that define what "a good read" is like. Focused on friendships between childhood friends. Reading it has caused several of our members to start reading other books by this author.

Dottie read:

*Ink Black Heart* by Robert Galbraith, a.k.a. JK Rowling. This book was a huge time commitment, 1000ish pgs. Dottie was surprised and disappointed that she didn't love it as much as she enjoyed earlier books in the series. She felt that the incorporation of social media and all the social media abbreviations detracted from the story, and was also frustrated that by the end, the main characters still were no closer to getting together.

*Fox Creek* by William Kent Krueger. This is the 18th in the Cork O'Connor series set in the Northwoods of Minnesota. An enjoyable read. Note: the first book in the series is *Iron Lake* (but there is a prequel to the series called *Lightning Strike*, featuring Cork O'Connor as a teenager, that is also a good place to start.) If this author's name sounds familiar, it's because he wrote *Ordinary Grace* and *This Tender Land*, two books that a lot of people in this group liked.

*We are the light* by Matthew Quick. This was an interesting book, written in the form of letters from a man who survived a tragedy to his analyst. Dottie didn't know where the story was going at the beginning, but it slowly comes out in the letters. She liked it a lot, and thought it was a moving story about grief.

JoAnn read:

*The Rosamund Pilcher collection* – – three good short stories about families and happiness.

*Showstopper* by Peter Lovesey. This is the latest book in the Detective Peter Diamond series, set in Bath, England. A good read, funny.

*We need new names* by No Violet Bulawayo. Set in Zimbabwe during civil wars. Really good description of the tragedies that occurred to villagers in this time period, and what they went through in the refugee camps. The main character eventually comes to the US to live with her aunt, which is not ideal because her aunt has a lot of problems too. It was a very good read, but a heavy one.

Marianne read:

*The Quilter's Homecoming* by Jennifer Chiaverini. This was two intertwining stories - one from the 1800s and one in 1925. Chiaverini is a good writer, and the book was very well done. Marianne enjoyed it.

*Jacqueline in Paris* by Ann Mah. Historical fiction about the year Jackie Onassis spent in Paris in 1949, and how her love for Paris influenced her later life. It was a very good novel.



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*This Tender Land* by William Kent Krueger. This was a Montville Book club choice. Marianne really loved it, couldn't put it down, and read it in one day.

*Memoirs of a Geisha* by Arthur Golden. This was a mostly enjoyable read, but Marianne felt it could have been shorter - there were a lot of wordy descriptions of things that could've been edited out.

Becky read:

*The bullet that missed* by Richard Osman. Number three in the Thursday murder club series. Becky loved it.

All that's left unsaid by Tracey Lien. A very good book- sad, and also almost haunting - about a Vietnamese immigrant family in Australia. Amazon's review says: "Alternating between Ky's voice and the perspectives of the witnesses, Tracey Lien's extraordinary debut is at once heart-pounding and heart-rending as it probes the intricate bonds of friendship, family, and community through an unforgettable cast of characters, all connected by a devastating crime. Combining evocative family drama and gripping suspense, All That's Left Unsaid is a profound and moving page turner"

Margaret just read *Sam Hell* this month - it was a busy holiday!

Irene read:

*World of Curiosities* by Louise Penny. This was an enjoyable read.

*Hamnet* by Maggie O'Farrell. The dead son of William Shakespeare. Not recommended.

*Daisy Darker* by Alice Feeney. An enjoyable psychological thriller.

Mary read:

*Showstopper* by Peter Lovesey, same as JoAnn - Mary also enjoyed it.

The Ransomware Hunting team by Renee Dudley - an interesting (if geeky) nonfiction book,

*This is what it sounds like: what the music you love says about you*, by Susan Rogers. Another nonfiction book that was pretty interesting.

*Ms. Demeanor* by Elinor Lipman

*The last bookshop in London* by Madeline Martin. Enjoyable historical fiction set during World War 2.