

Booklovers Group July 2015

Inherit the Dead, a classic noir mystery thriller, with a kind of a useless detective, Pericles Christo, who is a PI with a past. Twenty mystery authors participated and each wrote a different chapter. More fun than great, by still lots of fun!

Savage Beauty is the story of Edna St. Vincent Millay. The reader does not always read biography's and was hooked, this one was amazing. The author, Nancy Milford, got a hold of a trove of letters which covers so much more about daily life and growing up quite poor, in Maine. It was also of interest to note that she really made money from being a poet, which we know is not always the case. A very free spirit "My candle burns at both ends". . She was attracted to all sorts of people, both men and women. Eventually she got married to a Dutch person, who was wealthy and set up a nice estate in NY. The couple moved to Maine and bought an island. What the author has done has taken her poems and placed them at important points of her life and is so reflective of what was going on her life. It was riveting!! Totally recommended.

Bill Bryson writes ***At Home a short history of private life***, it was just 100 percent delightful. He takes every room in the house and gives a long dissertation and then a comment which can have you laughing out loud. One example is the history of medicine and the bedroom. One minute you are flabbergasted by the trivia and then laughing out loud. He has written many books, one is Notes from a small island. Adds satirical comments. Highly recommended!

Original Sin by P.D. James. Wonderful mystery with the death of the chairman of a publishing house, with many people who disliked him. Detective Adam Dalgliesh works to untangle this mess, and searching for a killer who won't hesitate to strike again. Twists and turns. Not predictable

The Narrow Road to the Deep North by Richard Flanagan. A novel of love and war that traces the life an Australian surgeon--from a prisoner-of-war camp on the Thai-Burma Death Railway during World War II, up to the present. The Australian doctor attempts to keep the prisoners alive. The reader was struck by how many Koreans were conscripted by the Japanese. He writes like an absolute dream.

Go set a Watchman by Harper Lee. If you have read To Kill a Mockingbird or have seen the movie, a reader may find reading Go Set a Watchman very startling. You might also wonder if the book could exist without To Kill a Mockingbird. This book is worth a read, you have a better understanding of the town of Maycomb, of Atticus Finch, of Scout (now Jean Louise). Set against the backdrop of changing views of race relations in 1950's America-it was a wonder to read the view of these events through the eyes of an adult Jean Louise. The book was good and highly recommended.

Charles J. Shields writes ***Mockingbird, a Portrait of Harper Lee***. Lee refused for years to give interviews or allow for a fact check of information. At the end of the book are pages of notes detailing whom the author spoke to. Lee's mother suffered from mental illness and her sister was much older and ran the house when she was a kid. Her mother would play the piano, but was an absent figure and her father was an attorney. Lee's sister also became a lawyer and their father pushed her daughter to take over

the practice. It is interesting to read a biography that in many instances closely resembles the character in the author's books. Highly recommended!

The Sound of A Wild Snail eating is by Maine author, Elizabeth Tova Bailey. A very nice and beautiful book, which chronicles a sudden mystery illness that confines Bailey to bed. She kind of watches the snail eating while she takes a very quiet introspective journey of her own.

Wednesday is Indigo Blue by Richard E Cytowic and neuroscientist David Eagleman is the study and explanation of synesthesia. People's senses align colors to words and numbers in our minds. We have templates of how we see numbers or words in our heads which influences people's different perceptions and how we see the world. Fascinating! There are now several fiction and non-fiction books on this subject.