

# Fireside Readers Book Recommendations

May 2016

## Fiction

“**Wonder**” – **R.J. Palacio** Boy with facial deformity and how schoolmates react to him.

“**Unlikely pilgrimage of Harold Fry**” – **Rachael Joyce**. Englishman walks 600 miles to see a woman from his past who is dying.

“**The Stand**” – **Stephen King**. A plague wipes out most of the world’s population, and the survivors must choose between an evil or virtuous leader as the fate of humanity hangs in the balance.

“**The Nightingale**” – **Kristin Hannah**. World War II from a female perspective in occupied France

“**The Celestine Prophecy**” – **James Redfield**. In Peru an ancient manuscript with precepts for living a good life is discovered and creates controversy

“**Secret daughter**” – **Shilpi Somaya Gowda** An Indian woman in San Francisco adopts a baby girl from an Indian orphanage, and how the choice affects her life and the birth mother.

“**Room**” – **Emma Donoghue**. A woman has been kept prisoner in a room for several years and she makes plans to escape with her 5-year-old son.

“**Me before you**” – **Jojo Moyes**. A young Englishwoman becomes the caretaker of a young, recently paralyzed business man and complications result.

“**Life After Life**” – **Kate Atkinson**. What if you could live again and again until you got it right?

“**Cutting for Stone**” – **Abraham Verghese**. Twin brothers grow up in adoptive family in Ethiopia and become doctors.

“**Crimson Roses**” – **Grace Livingston Hill**. Romance.

“**Clara and Mr. Tiffany**” – **Susan Vreeland** Historical fiction. Clara is instrumental in making the Tiffany lamps. Explores the topics of women’s rights, unions and New York City culture.

“**11-22-63**” – **Stephen King**. Man travels back in time to try to prevent President Kennedy’s assassination.

“**The Whistling season**” - **Ivan Doig**. Teacher in a one room school in Montana.

**“All the light we cannot see” – Anthony Doerr.** Winner of the Pulitzer Prize. In WWII occupied France, a blind French girl and a German boy try to survive.

**“The silence of the sea” – Yrsa Sigurdottir.** An award winning author from Iceland tells a tale of a luxury yacht that crashes into a pier in Reykjavik, but the family and crew that were on board when it left Libson are missing. From the review: “This does not read like a typical whodunnit – brilliant crime writing, a memorable ending”

**“Ordinary grace” – William Kent Kruger.** The main character is a Methodist pastor. Three people die mysteriously, and the pastor and his family are deeply affected. “Well grounded, beautiful writing about grace.” Winner of the Edgar Award for Best Mystery Novel.

## **Mystery series**

**Anne Perry - The Charlotte & Thomas Pitt books.** Thomas Pitt is a London police officer in 1880s-1890s Victorian London who deals with both the “upstairs and downstairs” social classes. His wife Charlotte assists him with her social contacts and intuition.

**Anne Perry - The William Monk books.** Takes place in 1850s-1860s London. William has been a London police officer and an agent of private inquiry. Hester, his wife, is a nurse who runs a clinic in the slums and can often provide vital information to her husband.

**Sue Grafton – The Kinsey Milhone series.** Every book in this series about a female private investigator begins with a letter of the alphabet. First book is “A for Alibi”.

**Janet Evanovich – The Stephanie Plum series .** Stephanie works for her cousin’s bail bond agency in Trenton, New Jersey as a bond enforcement officer, apprehending people who have skipped out on their bail. Quirky and humorous characters. Fast, fun reading.

**Allen Bradley – Flavia DeLuce series.** In 1950’s England, a 12-year-old girl solves mysteries. The series has won several prestigious awards for mystery writing.

**Patricia Cornwell – Kay Scarpetta series.** Kay is a forensic pathologist/ medical examiner who resolves difficult cases.

## **Other series**

**Alexander McCall Smith – The 44 Scotland Street series** By the author of the acclaimed “No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency” series. 44 Scotland Street is the address of an apartment building in a middle class section of Edinburgh. The series follows the ups and downs of the residents over several years. A gentle read with characters you’d like to meet such as precocious 6-year-old Bertie, intelligent dog Cyril, and his artist owner.

**Elena Ferrante – Neopolitan Quartet** Covers the lives of 2 friends from 1950s-1970s in Naples. **“My brilliant friend” “Story of a new name” “Those who leave, and those who stay” “The story of the lost child”**

## **Nonfiction**

**All I need to know I learned in kindergarten” – Robert Fulghum.** Uncommon thoughts on common things. Short chapters.

**“Billion-dollar spy: A true story of Cold War espionage and betrayal – David Hoffman.** A Soviet man becomes one of the CIA’s most valuable spies until a shocking betrayal.

**“Finding Eichmann: How a band of survivors and a young spy agency chased down the world’s most notorious Nazi” – Neal Bascomb**

**“Grace and grit” – Lilly Ledbetter.** Her fight to secure equal pay for equal work for all women.

**“Mulberry child: A memoir of China” – Jian Ping** Her life during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) and the abuse and deprivation her family suffers as they struggle to survive.

**“My bright abyss: Meditations of a modern believer” – Christian Wiman.** A poet faces his own mortality. Recommended by Rev. H.D. Mitchell.

**“Walking the Nile” – Levison Wood.** Wood sets out to become the first person to walk the entire length of the Nile River. A 9-month journey through 6 countries, encountering African history and contemporary life as well as challenging terrain and dangerous wildlife.

**“The Rainbow comes and goes: a mother and son on life, love and loss – Anderson Cooper** Cooper and his mother, Gloria Vanderbilt, reflect on their lives and relationship.

**“The Secret rescue: an untold story of American nurses and medics behind enemy lines” – Cate Lineberry.** After their plane crashes in Nazi occupied Albania, the staff struggles to survive with the help of local citizens. Finalist for 2 prestigious prizes for fact based crime books

**Bill O’Reilly - “Killing Reagan”, “Killing Kennedy”, “Killing Patton”, “Killing Jesus”, “Killing Lincoln”**

**Sarah Vowell -** From an Amazon review of her books: “She mixes historical facts with wit and keen social commentary”

## **Where to find other good reads**

**Book Page** – A monthly free publication available at public libraries. It reviews fiction, nonfiction and children’s titles. Also check their website [www.bookpage.com](http://www.bookpage.com)

**Book TV** - On cable channel CSPAN2 from 7:00 a.m. Saturday to 7:00 a.m. Monday. Author interviews, book fairs, and author appearances at bookstores and other venues. They only cover nonfiction. Also check their website [www.booktv.org](http://www.booktv.org) to watch their programs and for other information.

[www.goodreads.com](http://www.goodreads.com) – Books are listed by category

