



BEYOND THE BESTSELLERS

July 2013 - FICTION

The Abundance

Majmudar, Amit - 2013 - 255p.

Setting: Midwest, present day

FIC MAJMUDAR

Mala and Ronak are grown children of Indian immigrants. They learn that their mother has cancer and return to the family home in the Midwest to be with her. Mala asks her mother to teach her how to cook the traditional Indian dishes. Cooking has always been an expression of their mother's love for her family. A new chapter in their lives begins, and there is a new closeness between them. This is a novel about family, the clash of cultures and the bonds between the generations. It is a warm novel that has many layers—sweet and bitter, sad and joyful. Through it all you see the love that they have for each other.

As Sweet as Honey

Ganesan, Indira - 2013 - 269 p.

Setting: Indian Ocean island and England

FIC GANESAN

On a lovely island in the Indian Ocean, Mina lives with her extended family at the family compound run by her grandmother. Her favorite Aunt Meterling, who is very tall and has finally found love, is getting married to a man from England named Archer. The groom unexpectedly dies from a stroke suffered during the wedding dance. Family and friends are surprised when Aunt Meterling announces she's going to have a child. Archer's brother Simon comes to the island to inform Meterling that Archer left his house and land in England to her. He finds her enchanting, marries her and takes her to England to live and raise the child. As we meet the many members of the extended family, we follow their struggles with race, culture and family traditions in their quest to make lives for themselves. This book evokes wonderful images of the island, England and the cultures of both places. There is even a ghost that shows up to see how things are progressing. A very pleasant read.

Astor Place Vintage

Lehmann, Stephanie - 2013 - 396 p.

Setting: Current day and 1907 New York City

FIC LEHMANN

Amanda Rosenbloom owns Astor Place Vintage clothing shop but finds more than some beautiful old dresses when she visit 98-year-old Jane Kelly. Among the consigned items is a fur muff with a diary from 1907 hidden inside. Amanda, who loves New York history, reads the diary and learns about Olive Westcott, a 19-year-old orphan who hopes to become a department store buyer. She's just lost her father & her income and struggles with expectations about her gender and class as she finds work, settles into a boarding house, and makes new friends. Amanda faces losing her store lease, undergoes hypnosis for insomnia, and vows to break up once and for all with her high-school-sweetheart-married-lover and find a man she can start a family with before she hits menopause. Lehmann deftly weaves Amanda's and Olive's stories, taking readers on a virtual tour of old New York (with vintage photos to aid the imagination) in the

process. As the novel unfolds it becomes clear that although women today enjoy more rights and freedoms, they have many of the same concerns, dreams, ambitions and desires as their sisters of a century ago. A fun, interesting, thought-provoking read for history buffs and fans of Joanna Trollope and Masterpiece's Mr. Selfridge. An excellent choice for book clubs.

Patron Saint of Lost Dogs

Trout, Nick - 2013 - 340 p.

Setting: Contemporary Vermont

FIC TROUT

The reclusive Dr. Cyrus Mills, veterinary pathologist, returns to his hometown of Eden Falls to take over his estranged father's veterinary practice after his death. Unbeknownst to his father's partner, his intent is to sell the practice to pay off his legal bills and get his veterinary license reinstated. The story follows Dr. Mills from his arrival in rustic Eden Falls when he learns the practice is about to be foreclosed and that he has seven days to create enough income to make the first payment to the bank. Over these seven days he learns to work with living patients, chooses not to euthanize a healthy dog, helps deliver a baby kitten and a baby boy, and meets someone he wants to date, as well as makes peace with his crusty office manager. He also learns much about himself, his father and the many pet owners of Eden Falls, where everyone knows everyone's business. A quick, fun read for a lazy summer day from a Massachusetts veterinarian who previously published three nonfiction books, including *Tell Me Where It Hurts* (636 TROUT).

Resolve

Hensley, J. J. - 2013 - 248 p.

Setting: Contemporary Philadelphia

M FIC HENSLEY

The combination theme of marathon and murder caught my eye... The 26 chapters of this fast-paced mystery follow Dr. Cyprus Keller's run in the Philadelphia race, with flashbacks to incidents which have made him a killer. Keller, cop turned professor of criminology, was one of the last people to see his student, senior Lindsay Behram, alive. His detective instincts get him entwined in a twisted series of murders, and he plans to see justice served before reaching the finish line.

Silent Voices

Cleeves, Ann - 2013 - 314 p.

Setting: Contemporary Northumberland, England M FIC CLEEVES

Here's a British mystery writer with a new protagonist, DI Vera Stanhope, who has many personal issues. She's a lonely, single, overweight, unattractive, uncouth middle-aged woman who's a crack Detective Inspector. When she stumbles upon a dead body in the sauna of the fitness club she's recently joined, she thinks it might simply be a death from natural causes. Of course it turns out it was murder. Now it's up to Vera and her Sergeant, a good-looking younger married man aspiring to Vera's job who puts up with all her quirks, to follow the web of connections in the present and the past among the residents of Barnard Bridge, along with a couple more bodies, to figure out who the killer is. There are numerous sub-plots, past and present, that in the end do tie all together, but you'll still be guessing who the guilty party is until the very end.

Recommended for fans of Ruth Rendell, Minette Walters, or other British police mystery writers like Peter Lovesey, Martha Grimes or Elizabeth George.