

Who done it?

Mystery Discussion
Group

What's Next?

January 23—Annual Birthday gathering —Cedar Creek Inn at 1:15

February 26—Read Your Initials - Library Community Room at 2:00

March 26 –Female Irish authors or characters. Erin Hart comes to mind.—Library Community Room at 2:00 and everyone read C.J. Box's BLUE HEAVEN for the library One City One Book celebration.

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Winter 2011-2012

Volume 15, Issue

January Birthday Party



We will be having our Birthday Luncheon at CEDAR CREEK INN. If you want to car pool please gather at the Book Corner at the Yorba Linda Library by 12:55. I will make reservations for 1:20 and it would be helpful if you let me know if you planning on joining the party.

For a complete listing of lunch items try the web site at:

<http://cedarcreekinn.com/menus/brealunch2.html>

I was going to cut and paste a few of the items that sounded mouth-watering, but it seems I can't and besides this newsletter is going to be long anyway.

This is not the least expensive place we've been...or maybe prices are up in all nice restaurants. Nor is it as expensive as a couple of places we've been Sandwiches range from

\$10 to \$15 and salads also start at \$10. The most expensive item I found was the Seafood salad at \$17.00. If you look at the Dinner menu—Items get somewhat higher—we once had Osso Bucco when it was a special and it was even better than the shrimp dish I usually get. Good thing I don't drink wine or dinner might get a bit pricy.

It is that time of year that people start posting their favorite mystery reading of 2011. The lists are usually 10 long. If you bring your list, I'll combine them and make a WHO DONE IT? List. I'm going to have to do some work to whittle my list down to 10. ..and I've got one I must finish before the end of the year.

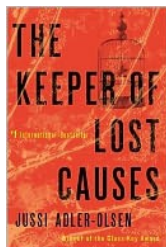
So Happy Reading in 2012

Karen
in late Dec. 2011

Members Reviews Oct thru November 2011

Adler-Olsen, Jussi – **THE KEEPER OF LOST CAUSES** – 4.0 (Nancy)

The first Dept. Q series finds a recovering detective relegated to the basement and put in charge of cold cases with only one assistant, the immigrant Assad. Together they solve the case of a woman politician who disappeared five years before.



Andrews, Mary Kay – **BLUE CHRISTMAS** – 3.25 (Nancy)

Antique dealer in Savanna is decorating her shop for a 50's Blue Christmas theme. Her decorations are vandalized, her truck is broken into and a strange woman is found sleeping in her display. Does the amateur sleuth solve the mystery?

Beaton, M. C. – **A HIGHLAND CHRISTMAS** - 3.75 (Nancy)

Hamish MacBeth is on the case in Lockdubh, Scotland. A lonely old woman with a missing cat, a lonely young girl whose parents don't believe in Christmas and a nearby town with stolen lights and tree. MacBeth solves them all.

Berensen, Laurien – **JINGLE BELL BARK** – 2.5 - (Corinne)

Christmas in Connecticut – single teacher and mother with a show poodle. Murder

Black, Cara – **MURDER IN PASSY** – 4.0 (Anne)

P.I. Aimee Leouc is asked to do a favor by her godfather, who is worried about his girlfriend. When he becomes a prime suspect in a murder case Aimee must find the real killer. Search lead to police corruption, Basque terrorists and a kidnapped Spanish princess. Good mystery, and a good history lesson with a good description of Paris.

Black, Lisa – **TRAIL OF BLOOD** – 3.0 - (Corinne)

Teresa MacLean, a forensic scientist in Cleveland investigates current murders that have strong ties to a serial killer from the 1930s – plus she has to cope with turning 40!!

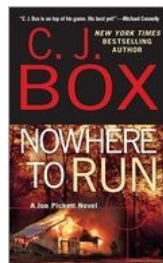
Blunt, Giles: **BLACK FLY SEASON** [2005] - 2.5 (Chitra)

This is the 3rd book in the John Cardinal series. It is early summer in Algonquin Bay and the black flies aren't the only ones out for blood. Someone is trying to kill a young red-haired woman, but after being shot in the head with a small caliber weapon she cannot remember her own name or where she is from, and least of all why anyone would want to hurt her. A horribly mutilated body of Wombat Guthrie, a biker and drug dealer is discovered. Are the two cases linked? Detectives Cardinal and Delorme pursue their investigations and an Ojibwa shaman, Red Bear pops up on their radar. He has recently moved into the drug trade and claims that the 'spirits' demand human sacrifice. As the mysterious young woman slowly regains her memory, Cardinal begins to suspect that she may not be so innocent after all. Started out interesting, but then took a dive and very predictable.

Box, C.J. – **BACK OF BEYOND** – 4.5 (Nancy)

Box, C.J. – **NOWHERE TO RUN** – 4.6 – (Susan)

Hard to take the beginning but very good after getting started.



Brady, Jacklyn - **A SHEET CAKE NAMED DESIRE** 3.5 – (Phyllis)

New Orleans pastry chef Rita Lucero goes to get the divorce papers signed and finds her husband with a knife in his chest.

Burke, James Lee – **THE GLASS RAINBOW** - #16 - 5.0 – (Karen)

Stunning conclusion? To the Cleto and Dave. Ultimate dealing with the Able-

lards and the deaths of 7 young girls..

Cannell, Stephen A. – **THE PROSTITUTES BALL**- 3.0 - (Corinne)

Shane Scully police procedural at Christmas - recent murder with ties to a 30 year old murder-suicide... New partner for Shane proves to be a challenge.

Carr, Carol K.: **INDIA BLACK: A MADAM OF ESPIONAGE MYSTERY** [2011] 3.5 (Chitra)

Set in the late 1800s, the beautiful young madam India Black is occupied with her usual tasks –providing her clientele with young girls, avoiding the police, and tolerating the clergyman who is bent on converting her girls. Sir Archibald Latham of the War Office dies from a heart attack while visiting her brothel; India is thrust into a deadly game between Russian and British agents who are seeking the military secrets Latham carried. French is a handsome British spy, who discovers India disposing of Latham's body and blackmails her into recovering the missing documents. Their quest takes them all over London, all the while dodging Russians intent on doing them harm.

Carver, Tania **THE SURROGATE** 3.0 (Bev)

A Shocking double murder scene greets D. I. Brennan when he is called to a flat in Colchester. Two women, cut open – one tied to the bed with her stomach cut open and her unborn child missing. Previously, two other pregnant women have been killed this way and their babies taken. Obviously not a book for the faint of heart!

Challinor, C. S. – **CHRISTMAS IS MURDER** - 3.5 (Nancy)

First in series about a Scottish barrister who is invited to spend the holiday in the English countryside. He arrives to find a dead guest and soon two more murder victims. The remaining group is snowed in and the barrister takes upon himself to solve the murders.

Child, Lee – **GONE TOMORROW** – 3.5 - (Corinne)

Reacher is a witness to a suicide on a NY subway – what follows is political intrigue. Al Qaeda – murder – but Reacher save the day –single handed.

Chris Mooney **MISSING** 3.5 (Bev)
Darby McCormick is a crime scene investigator for the Boston P.D. Her present case ties in with a childhood friend who went missing when they were teenagers.

I gave this book a 3.5. This book is about monsters who kidnapped women and kept them caged and tortured them. I skipped the chapters that were about the kidnapped women as they were so gruesome.

Christie, Agatha **THE AMAZING MISS MARPLE** - 4.0 (Joan)

A collection of several Miss Marple tales.

Christie, Agatha – **BLACK COFFEE** – 4.4 – (Nancy)

Adapted by Charles Osborne...a typical Hercule Poirot mystery. A scientist asks for help when he suspects someone is trying to steal his new formula. The scientist is found poisoned and the formula is missing.

Cline, Ernest – **READY PLAYER ONE** – 2011 – 4.9

(Karen)
In 2041 geeks seek hidden “easter egg” in game developers ultimate game to win his entire fortune. Developer used many scenes, games and clues from the 1980’s



Foreshadowed ending a tiny bit of a letdown. ...marred perfect 5.0

Cobin, Harlan – **SHELTER** – 2011 – 4.5 (Karen)

YA mystery with Mickey Boliltar. Nephew of Myron and living with him as in last series book Mickey’s father was killed in a car accident and his mother

overcome with grief became a drug addict. Micky’s only friend Ashley has disappeared and Mickey begins a search for answers with the help of two new friends, an overweight girl and a small make dweeb. Totally enjoyable

Connelly, Michael – **THE BLACK ICE** - 4.5 - (Deborah)

Harry Bosch, LAPDS detective investigates a Juan Doe murder and finds connections to the suicide of an undercover police officer. Harry is a likeable character who plays by his own rules.

Connelly, Michael – **THE REVERSAL** - 4.5 - (Corinne)

New DNA evidence causes a new trial for a convicted child killer. Bosch and Mickey Haller find themselves on the prosecution side. Great legal thriller and police procedural. Add to this unresolved family issues.

Coulter, Catherine – **SPLIT SECOND** – 4.75 – (Susan)

Good fast read in Sherlock and Savich series.

Dams, Jeanne **DEATH IN LACQUER RED** 4.0 (Joan)

Hilda Johansson, a young immigrant from Sweden working as a servant for the Studebaker family around the turn-of-the-19th century in South Bend, Indiana discovers the body of a woman who has just returned from missionary work. The police are quick to blame a Chinaman that Hilda does not think is guilty. Hilda investigates.

Dams, Jeanne **SINS OUT OF SCHOOL** 3.5 (Joan)

Dorothy Martin, an American in England, is preparing Thanksgiving when she gets a call to sub for a missing teacher. Thee days later the teacher’s husband is found dead in the home and the mother and daughter are questioned. Dorothy delves into their past to solve the murder.

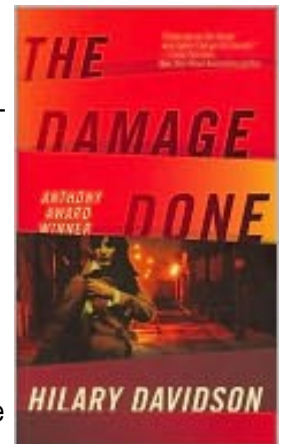
Davidson, Hilary – **THE DAMAGE DONE** – 2010 – 4.5 (Karen)

Lily Moore returns to NY City when her drug addicted sister is found dead.

When Lily’s trip to the morgue to identify her sister reveals the body is someone else, her troubles really begin. A cop, an old gay friend, her ex- fiancé and her sister’s ex lover add to her problems or her answers. A stolen identity used to cover up the real crime.

Davidson, Hilary.:**THE DAMAGE DONE** [2010] 3.5 (Chitra)

Travel writer Lily Moore is called home to New York from Barcelona with the horrible news that her sister, Claudia, has been found dead in the apartment they share. Worse still, Claudia’s death appears to be a suicide, tragically timed to coincide with the anniversary of their mother’s suicide. When she goes to the medical examiner’s office to officially identify Claudia’s body she discovers the person found dead in their apartment was not her sister. Someone had been impersonating Claudia and living as her for the past six months. The question still unanswered - where is Claudia? The book is filled with wonderful characters - Lily’s overly attentive ex-fiancé and owner of a string of hotels, Martin Sklar; Claudia’s former lover Tariq Lawrence, a mysterious and wealthy Pakistani; Lily’s loyal and best friend Jesse; the two detectives who wonder whether Claudia is a victim or a suspect. A fast moving and well written mystery that also talks about the problems with mental health care.



When Lily’s trip to the morgue to identify her sister reveals the body is someone else, her troubles really begin. A cop, an old gay friend, her ex- fiancé and her sister’s ex lover add to her problems or her answers. A stolen identity used to cover up the real crime.

Dunn, Carola – **BLACK SHIP** – 3.0 – (Yvonne)

Slow moving about an English gentry and servant class perspective to the American inanity called Prohibition Daisy and her husband who works for Scotland Yard solve a murder next

Members Reviews Oct thru November 2011 cont.

door..

Dunn, Carola **SHEER FOLLY** 3.5
(Joan)

Daisy Dalrymple and friend Lucy, go to a county estate, owned by a plumbing supplier, for a photo shoot of a Grotto. The guest list is assorted and tensions rise. An explosion in the Grotto causes the death of an unliked guest. Lucy's photo help identify the killer.

Evanovich, Janet – **FINGER LICKIN' FIFTEEN** 1.0 (Caryn)

Characters are thrown in from nowhere. Story is underdeveloped. Hints of relationships, but no romance. Vulgar.

Fairbanks, Nancy **BON BON VOYAGE (#8)** 3.0 (Caryn)

A culinary mystery with recipes. Carolyn, a food editor is invited on a Mother's Day cruise with her husband. She ends up going with her mother-in-law and her retired cop friend and a passenger goes missing. Cruise ship gets hijacked and Carolyn is investigating when she is almost killed.

Fields, Tricia – **THE TERRITORY - #1** – 2011 – 3.0 (Karen)

Artemis, West Texas...border town where two drug cartels are hoping to gain control and provide easy US access. Police Chief, Josie Gray has her hands full with a self-centered mayor as well as the cartel war that has crossed the border. Great (maybe even too much) description of the setting – but lacking something to keep my interest very high. Won a Tony Hillerman prize

Ford, G. M. – **BLACK RIVER** – 5.0 – (Yvonne)

Frank Corso, an ace investigative journalist fired by the New York Times for fabricating a story lives and walks through the Seattle streets, and is the only journalist allowed to cover the federal trial of a nasty Russian hoodlum accused of causing the collapse of a

Los Angeles hospital. His lady friend-photographer Meg Dougherty, whose body was covered in hideous tattoos by a berserk former lover-winds up in the hospital after stumbling on two of the Russian's hired killers. Those killers, a pair of convincingly scary Cubans; a touchingly fallible female federal prosecutor with a slight drinking problem; a Cambodian apartment manager; a young medical student trying to understand his missing father-are all made so real so quickly that you might miss the considerable artistry involved. Fast paced suspenseful thriller.

Fossum, Karin **BLACK SECONDS** 1.0 (translated by Charlotte Barslund - 1.0) (Caryn)

An Inspector Sejer mystery. A 9 year old girl goes missing – last seen on her bike. Book was juvenile and put me to sleep. Also had a poor translation.

Franklin, Tom – **CROOKED LETTER, CROOKED LETTER** – 4.0 - (Corinne)
1970's South – a black and a white boy become friends but when a white girl disappears nothing is the same. 20 years later the two, no longer friends, are reunited by secrets from the past and another disappearance.

Frazer, Margaret **THE WIDOW'S TALE** 3.75 (Joan)

Set in medieval England. Sibling rivalry between two cousins. The older one dies and the young one wants to take over the property. He takes the two daughter with the intention of marrying the older one to his son and sending the younger to a nunnery. He captures the widow and sends her to a nunnery with a trumped up tale of her wanton ways. Dame Frevisse gets involved

Fuller, Alexandra **COCKTAIL HOUR UNDER THE TREE OF FORGETFULNESS** – (Gale)

The author braids a multilayered narrative around the perfectly lit, Happy Valley

-era Africa of her mother's childhood; the boiled cabbage grimness of her father's English childhood; and the darker, civil war- torn Africa of her own childhood. At its heart, this is the story of Fuller's mother, Nicola. Born on the Scottish Isle of Skye and raised in Kenya, Nicola holds dear the kinds of values most likely to get you hurt or killed in Africa: loyalty to blood, passion for land, and a holy belief in the restorative power of all animals. Fuller interviewed her mother at length and has captured her inimitable voice with remarkable precision. The book is as funny, terrifying, exotic, and unselfconscious as Nicola herself.

Garcia-Roza, Luiz Alfredo : **BLACK-OUT** [2006] 3.5 (Chitra)

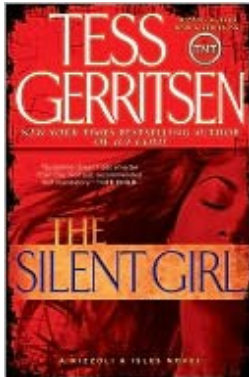
A corpse with only one leg is discovered on a cul-de-sac outside a home whose owners had given a dinner party the night before. Interior decorator Aldo Bruno, was the first to leave the party with his psychotherapist wife Camilla, -- did they notice anything? Aldo tells Inspector Espinosa and his men that he did not see a thing in the rainy night .Aldo tells Camilla that the whole incident is a blank in his memory. There are no witnesses, no identification of the dead man and certainly no link between him and Aldo. The case would probably have languished but for the fact that Aldo stumbled on a second corpse. Inspector Espinosa now has to wonder about the coincidence and consider all possible motives for murder. I was enjoying the book, but then the ending was a total let-down!

Gerritsen, Tess – **THE SILENT GIRL** – 4.15 (Nancy)

Gerritsen, Tess **THE SILENT GIRL** 5.0+ (Bev)

Boston homicide policewoman, Jane Rizzoli investigates a case that ties into a 20-year old murder/suicide. Solving

the case involves Chinese folklore, martial arts, legends of 500 year old battles and weapons. Once I started this book, I couldn't put it down - 5+



Grimes, Martha

– **THE BLACK CAT** – 2.5 – (Phyllis)
Jury drinks his way thru. 3 girls are killed who belong to 3 different escort services.

Hamrick, Janice – **DEAD ON TIME** – 2.0 – (Phyllis)

Jocelyn and cousin Kyla are on a once in a lifetime tour of Egypt. A nosy traveler falls and dies.

Handler, David – **THE BLOOD RED INDIAN SUMMER** - #8 -2011- 3.75 (Karen)

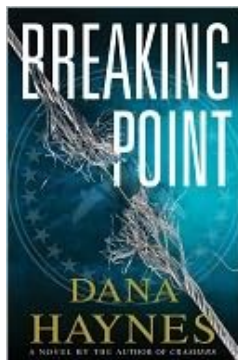
Rather violent football player (on suspension) moves to Dorset, CT. ;both Berger and Mitry deal with their parents but find time to solve the attempted rape and murder of the ball players sister-in-law.

Harper, Karen – **BLACK ORCHID** – 1996 – 3.5 (Karen)

Jordan Quinn, home in the Everglades...with an orchid shop...a husband involved in research with panthers resistance to ;LHIV...Previous first love is now the leader of the Seminole community. Local sheriff...looks from getgo to be a villain. A little predictable.

Haynes, Dana – **BREAKING POINT** - #2 – 2011 – 4.9 (Karen)

The NTSB group is once again investigating a plane crash this time in Montana and with 3 members of the NTSB on board. 8 people survive...but a



hired killer has killed 6 more that survived the crash. ALL power was lost.

Hyde, Christopher **BLACK DRAGON** 4.0 (Joan)

A recent Presidential appointee is executed and found with a mutilated body with a sign of Black Dragon - crime syndicate from Hong Kong. A splinter group called the Holy Ghost is in charge. Phyllis Dane investigates.

James, P.D.: **THE BLACK TOWER** [1975] 3.5 (Chitra)

Commander Dalgliesh is recuperating, when he receives a letter from an old friend, Father Baddley. When Dalgliesh reaches Toynton Grange on the Dorset Coast, he finds that the old man mysteriously died prior to his arrival. This is followed by 3 other mysterious deaths in quick succession. Through it all, the black tower stands as a symbol of darkness and of the danger of human nature -- an emblem of everything that drives people to their own destruction. A mixture of self-identity search, murder mystery, and a bit of action are throw into the mix.

[Note: I was surprised to find that there really is a black tower that inspired the title of this story. Clavell Tower was constructed in 1830 for the Reverend John Richards Clavell, an eccentric clergyman. P.D. James first saw the tower in 1973 and found inspiration for this mystery].

Jones, Tayari – **SILVER SPARROW** – 4.0 – (Nancy)

Heartbreaking and factual story set in Atlanta in the 1980's about the bigamist James Witherspoon. Told from the viewpoint of two daughters (from different families).

Kellerman, Jonathan – **MYSTERY** – 3.0 - (Corinne)

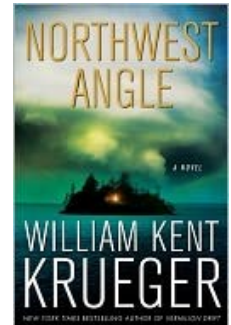
Alexi Delaware and Milo Sturgis once again deal with a brutal murder. The seamy side of L.A. prostitution with a touch of Beverly Hills money – perversion and terminal illness.

Klein, Daniel – **BLUE SUEDE CLUES** –

3.5 (Anne)

Elvis has just complete K1"Kissin Cousins", of which he is ashamed and is trying to sort out his career moves. A stuntman, an old army buddy, contacts him and says he is in jail for the murder of a young actress. Elvis decides to help clear him. A good light mystery in which the author makes good use of his knowledge of Elvis.

Krueger, William
Kent – **NORTHWEST ANGLE** – 5.0 (Susan)
His best yet.



Larrison, Asa **THE BLACK PATH** 3.0 (Joan)

A dead woman is found on a frozen lake and Inspector Melea and lawyer Rebecka work at finding out who she is which leads them to Kallis Mining and to a scheme to provide money for arms in Africa. Very dark.

Lehane, Dennis – **A DRINK BEFORE THE WAR** – 3.0 - (Corinne)

First Kenzie and Gennaro mystery – Boston where corrupt politicians hire the pair to find some stolen papers – murder – gang wars soon follow.

Levine, Paul – **LASSITER** – #8 - 2011 – 4.0 (Karen)

Defense attorney Jake Lassiter reveals bad behavior some 18 years earlier and in an attempt to redeem himself, takes on a client of a young woman gone missing from a Porn kingpins party. Old buddy, now the DA, attempts to convince Jake to bury the case. Jake, something of a pit bull won't let the client quit.

MacDonald, Ross – **BLACK MONEY** – 3.5 – (Phyllis)

A beautiful young woman jilts her fiancé and takes up with a presumed French political refugee. Archer becomes involved with several murders and a gigantic swindle.

MacDonald, Ross – **BLACK MONEY** –

Members Reviews – and finally the last two pages

4.0 – (Phyllis)

Virginia gives up her fiancé Peter for Francis Martel who claims to be French. Several murders later she goes back to Peter.

Mankell, Henning – **THE TROUBLED MAN** 4.75 (Nancy)

Maron, Margaret – **CHRISTMAS MOURNING** – 3.0 (Nancy)

Sheriff Dep. Dwight Bryant and Judge Knott are looking into the tragic car accident that killed a high school cheerleader when two other young people are found shot. Amid family Christmas activities and celebrating their 1 year anniversary they solve both cases.

Maron, Margaret – **THREE DAY TOWN** – 2011 - #17 – 4.0 (Karen)

While in New York for their delayed honeymoon, Judge Deborah Knott and Dwight Bryant agree to deliver a package to NYPD lieutenant Sigrid Harald, but when a doorman is murdered and the package.. goes missing, Deborah and Dwight join the investigation.

Neville, Stuart – **STOLEN SOULS** (#3 Jack Lennon) – 3.5 – (Corinne)

A thriller dealing with human trafficking – violence. Belfast deals with Lithuanian gangs – crooked cops – all while celebrating Christmas. Add to this a serial killer

Otto Penzler, editor **BLACK NOIR** - 4.0 (Anne)

Mystery, crime, suspense fiction by African American writers. A short biography about each author was very interesting.

Paretsky, Sara – **BLACKLIST** – 3.5 - (Corinne)

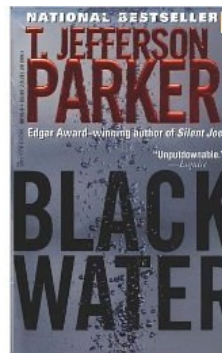
V.I. must explore past secrets to help solve current murders. The role of homeland security is another aspect of her investigation – plus how different the wealthy are treated by the legal system.

Parker, T. Jefferson

BLACK WATER

5.0+ (Bev)

Merci Rayborn, an Orange County Detective investigates the shooting of a Deputy and the murder of his wife. The D.A. wants the deputy charged with the murder of his wife and his own attempted suicide. Merci doesn't see it that way and of course, proves otherwise. T. Jeff's books always get a 5+ rating from me!



Parrish, Leslie **FADE TO BLACK** 3.75 (Joan)

Lisa Zimmerman leaves for lunch and does not return. Months later her body is found cut up. At the FBI an IT specialist comes across a video showing the death of said girl. They soon discover that a web is auctioning off the means of killing.. FBI Taggart and Hope Valley Sheriff Rhodes team up to solve the crimes.

Patchett, Ann – **STATE OF WONDER** – 3.0 (Nancy)

Pearson, Ridley – **THE BODY OF DAVID HAYES** – 2.5 - (Corinne)

Slow moving Lou Boldt – marital infidelity – embezzlement – Russian mob – usual cast of characters.

Penny, Louise – **A TRICK OF LIGHT** - 4.0 (Nancy)

Quinn, Spencer – **THE DOG WHO KNEW TOO MUCH** – 5.0 – (Susan)

Third in this dog and man duo P.I. series that is a favorite of mine.

Rankin, Ian – **THE BLACK BOOK** – 4.0 – (Phyllis)

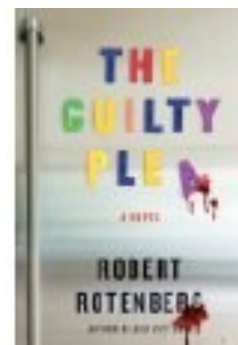
Edinburgh's seedy central hotel was burnt to ashes 5 years ago. A charred body with a bullet in it's head is found

among the ruins.

Rotenberg, Robert – **THE GUILTY PLEA** – 4,5 – (Gale)

Set in Toronto and focusing on the Canadian justice system. The book opens with the discovery of a body. Wealthy Terrance Wyler has been found dead on the eve of his divorce case coming to court. It's a high profile case as Wyler's girlfriend is a Hollywood actress. But it's also a case about the future of a four year old child, Simon..

Simon was asleep and unaware when his father was killed. In the morning, his only memory from the night before is that of his mother walking into his room and telling



him that she may be away for some time. All evidence leads to the soon to be ex-wife Samantha, and a guilty plea is expected. It's delivered. And then, unexpectedly retracted. This is a legal thriller of great pace and tension. Rotenberg knows how to bring a cast of characters to life. Toronto too, is one of these characters. Rotenberg pumps his story with the day to day living of each character and tours the terrain of Toronto and its eateries as we read. No one is so minor as to not have a backstory to bring them to life. Toronto is seen through the eyes of its inhabitants, as it really is: the values and struggles of the immigrant population; the segregation of the wealthy, mainly Caucasian and embedded with old money in the bank; the city's obsession with its murder statistics; the ongoing conflict of being North American like the US, but balancing allegiance to a Commonwealth Crown.

Rozan, S. J. – **GHOST HERO** - #11 –

2011 – 3.0 – (Karen)

Lydia is hired to prove a rumor of a Chinese artists work. Artist was killed at Tiananmen uprising and new paintings are rumored to be available. Ultimately rather boring and at times a bit silly. Bill plays a Russian mob boss art buyer. Would have been better served with some visual samples of the art types in question

Sefton, Maggie – **FLEECE NAVIDAD** DNR(did not rate – too cozy) (Anne)

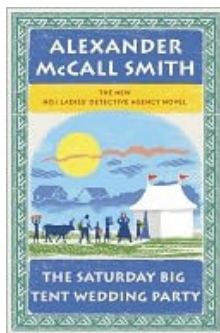
A woman with a puzzling past arrives in town followed by a bitter daughter-in-law. Kelly Flynn (Amateur sleuth, financial accountant and knitter gets involved. Filled with hat knitting and cookie baking.

Silva, Daniel – **PORTRAIT OF A SPY** – 3.5 - (Corinne)

Gavriel Allon, art restorer and spy hunts terrorists with the help of the CIA and MI5 and the Massad and the most unlikely of partners.

Smith, Alexander McCall - **THE SATURDAY BIG TENT WEDDING PARTY** – 5.0 (Anne)

The latest in the #1 Ladies Detective Agency series finds Precious investigating a cattle killing, a missing apprentice, and a mysterious sighting of her old van. Will wedding bells finally ring for Grace and Phuti?



Stanley, Jennifer – **PATH OF THE WICKED** 2.0 – (Yvonne)

Cooper, a Xerox repair person must solve the mysteries of a poisoned client by someone volunteering for a meals on wheels program.

Stockett, Kathryn – **THE HELP** – 5.0 – (Susan)

A look at the beginning of the civil rights movement.

Viets, Elaine – **MURDER WITH ALL THE TRIMMINGS** – 2.5 - (Yvonne)

Josie, a professional mystery shopper must solve the deaths of several people poisoned at the Christmas shop.

Walker, Martin – **BLACK DIAMOND** – 3.5 – (Nancy)

Police chief in French countryside must solve an attack on Vietnamese vendors by the Chinese mafia, the theft of black diamonds (French truffles) and the murder of a retired secret agent. Too much detail about food, wine and French history.

Walls, Jeanette – **THE GLASS CASTLE** – 5.0 (Yvonne)

Gossip columnist Jeanette Walls dishes the dirt on her own troubled youth in this remarkable story of survival against overwhelming odds. The child of charismatic vagabonds who left their offspring to raise themselves, Walls spent decades hiding an excruciating childhood filled with poverty and shocking neglect. But this is no pity party. What shines through on every page of this beautifully written family memoir is Walls's love for her deeply flawed parents and her recollection of occasionally wonderful times.

Walls, Jeanette – **HALF BROKE HORSES** – 5.0 – (Yvonne)

A true novel that depicts vividly the author's maternal grandmother Takes place in the early to mid 20th century in New Mexico, Texas and Arizona. About a plain spoken, wisecracking, rifle toting horse breaking free spirit.

White, Randy Wayne - **BLACK WIDOW** – 1.0 (Anne)

Doc Ford's goddaughter Shay's wild bachelorette party in an exclusive Caribbean island has been secretly taped and Shay calls on Ford to make the blackmailer's money exchange. He does but also decides to get behind the scam which also involves voodoo, obeahs and blood spells. Poorly written with a so-so story.

White, Randy Wayne – **BLACK WIDOW** – 3.75 (Nancy)

Exciting and fast paced mystery finds

Doc Ford helping his goddaughter who is being blackmailed

White, Randy Wayne **BLACK WIDOW** 3.0 (Bev)

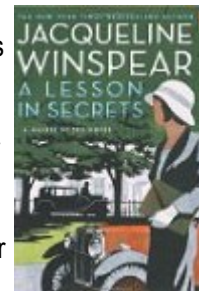
Doc Ford pays extortionists to keep them from publishing film of his goddaughter's wild bachelorette party. The book started out really good but the last half wasn't that great. I gave it a 3.

White, Stephen – **THE LAST LIE** – 3.0 - (Corinne)

Alan Gregory – Boulder CO psychologist and with the help of his D.A. wife and the other usual cohorts. Deals with murder, rape and arson. Slow movings.

Winspear, Jacqueline: **A LESSON IN SECRETS** [2011] 2.5 (Chitra)

Maisie Dobbs goes undercover for the Secret Police; she has this job due to her late mentor Maurice. She is posted to a small college in Cambridge. The goal of this college, St. Francis, is to foster peace by bringing in students from across the world together in the hopes that they will return to their homeland and become advocates for peaceful solutions to the world's problems.



While Dobbs is there as a lecturer in Philosophy, the college's founder is murdered. The story is set in two different eras – the war of the past, which relates to the college founder's murder, and the war of the future as Maisie uncovers that no matter the era – young people are especially gullible to bombastic political rhetoric. Maisie spends most of her time trying to solve that murder instead of focusing on her secret agent job of uncovering the nefarious doings of easily manipulated young people.

Read Your Initials and Other Amusements

Pick books with titles that start with your initials. For this assignment I have the following:

My initials are KLB

I've read in the past three months:

The **K**eeper of Lost Causes

The **K**illing Song **for K**

Lassiter **for L**

and

Breaking Point

Black Orchid

Blood Red Indian Summer **for B**

But now I've got to find a new set for January and February as my December reading hasn't had a single one of my initials.

Hope this gives you a clue...A, An and The don't count....so those of you with an A or a T in your initials...please look a little harder. Should one of you find all three initials in one title and in order I will be so impressed that you need only report that one book. If The Keeper of Lost Causes had been The Keeper of Lost Bankers...I could stop looking for other books.

The Darwin Award Winner for 2011 is: *Homo sapiens sapiens*, Endangered Species.

This 'wise man' was is declared an official "Endangered Species" by the Darwin Awards. Due to the proliferation of stresses like infernal plastic packaging, climate change, and heavy traffic, this colorful species has earned the "hats off to you!" imminent Darwin Award for 2011. In short: *Homo sapiens* species invented plastic packages so difficult to open that boxcutters and scissors, bloody fingers and gashed furniture became part of daily life. "The plastic shell deters theft." Once a meme exists there is no eradicating it from the species' minds. Regardless of how many frustrated people and cut fingers result, *Homo sapiens sapiens* slowly nicks itself to death on memes and plastic shells.

DARWIN AWARD OF THE CENTURY: ANGRY WHEELCHAIR MAN

Confirmed // South Korea: This angry man epitomizes the downfall of the human race. It began with simply missing an elevator, the proverbial straw on the camel's back. With stressed-out rage, Angry Wheelchair Man rammed his chair 3x against the lift doors, (bam! bam! bam!), angrily breaking through and falling down the rabbit hole of the elevator shaft to his death. This dead 40-year-old lives on as a poster child: Stress kills. Gravity kills, too

