



2023 Reading Challenge

NOVEMBER

**A book
recommended by a
local bookseller**

A reader from Wellesley read *The Twist of a knife* by Anthony Horowitz: “Wonderful...love Anthony Horowitz. He is a wonderful story teller. I stayed up all night trying to guess the culprit.”

A reader from Beverly read *The Fairy's Mistake* by Gail Carson Levine: “Charming retelling of a classic fairy tale. Fun way to start off the year!”

A reader from Salem read *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck: “Though this would not be a book I would pick out on my own, I did end up enjoying the characters and the scenery quite a bit at introduction. It seemed to be a beautiful beach/sea town in Mexico and the man seemed to really love his family. Overall I enjoyed reading the book. There is certainly a moral to the story and the pearl represents evil/temptation/greed in ones life. The ending was truly very unfortunate. I felt sympathy for the female character, Juana as she seemed satisfied with her life and family before. The pearl which at first introduction would represent the lottery or great fortune ended up being something that caused great misfortune. This story encapsulated an event that you misjudged or one might wish never happened, desperation, regret, and tragedy.”

A reader from Beverly read *Attack of the Black Rectangles* by Amy Sarig King: "I really, really liked this book-as a teacher & a parent. It teaches kids some history but also how to advocate for themselves & fight when they know something is wrong. I love the quote, "our job is to help them understand, not black out the topic" (King 249)."

A reader from Hampden read *The Bear* by Andrew Krivak: "I thought it was interesting. Enjoyed learning how the girl and her dad survived living in the wild."

A reader from Guyton read *Man, Fuck This House* by Brian Asman: "This book was good, then crazy, then dark, then weird. I would recommend it to anyone looking to read something outside of their comfort zone."

A reader from Beverly read *Live Oak, With Moss* by Walt Whitman, Brian Selznick: "Beautiful poems by Whitman with direct LGBTQ+ themes, especially between the love and friendship of two men. I'm curious to know more about how these poems were stuck together but Selznick has some beautiful drawings accompany the vast themes of the poem without being too direct."

A reader from Wakefield read *The Ferryman* by Justin Cronin: "A bit cliché but with a little bit of a twist at the end. The writing is good, but this story has been told before in myriad ways. I would have liked the world building to end at the world building rather than what it did. Still it's hard to find a well-written book that holds your attention."

A reader from Danvers read *The dinner list* by Rebecca Serle: "Thoughtful sweet story."

A reader from Stoneham read *The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien: "I loved the heavy descriptors of both characters and places, as well as the style of medieval, old-world storytelling."

A reader from northampton read *faith still moves mountains* by harris faulkner: "Stories to have faith and bible verses. Some of the stories are really good someone or God there to make the best move. Faith really moved in this book. THE MAN AT THE BOOK STORE DID NOT HAVE IT."

A reader from Melrose read *You Can't Stay Here Forever* by Katherine Lin: "The voice of the narrator engaged me with its humor, emotional range, and intelligence. I especially enjoyed the time in Antibes; who doesn't enjoy the South of France for coping with grief?"

A reader from Hopedale read *This Tender Land* by William Kent Krueger: "This could have just been a sad book but there was always optimism throughout to the end. I liked the good amount of description and action. I could always picture what the author was describing. You did t know until the very end how things would turn out which kept me glued to the book. I want to read his other book, Ordinary Grace."

A reader from Concord read *Orphan X* by Gregg Hurwitz: "Interesting quick read; new author for me; spy/orphan assassin style book."

A reader from WORCESTER read *ROSE COTTAGE* by MARY STEWART: "THIS WAS A LOVELY STORY SET IN THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE OF 1947. THERE IS INTRIGUE AS WELL AS LOVE AND WARMTH FOR THE MAIN CHARACTER WHO RETURNS TO HER CHILDHOOD HOME AFTER A LONG ABSENCE. IT WAS A VERY PLEASANT READ AND NOT ONE I WOULD HAVE PROBABLY CHOSEN ON MY OWN. THANKS TO THE BOOKSELLER!"

A reader from Springfield read *Real Life/Real Issues/Real Solutions* by Fr. Cedric Pisegna: "Pisegna offers a basic antidote to the world's problems through connection to other people and to God via prayer. He encourages people to work together to solve problems rather than let themselves become isolated. People have to stay connected to survive. This discusses COVID, mental illness, and the aftermath of COVID."

A reader from Northampton read *Yellowface* by R.F. Kuang: "Wasn't expecting the accidental death in the first chapter (haha maybe I need to read cover jackets or the backs of the books)! Anyways, I thought it was different since Kuang made both protagonists unlikeable but at different points you're rooting for Junie and then become conflicted and hope for her to be exposed— it definitely kept me on the edge of my seat!"

A reader from Andover read *The Horsewoman* by James Patterson: "I was surprised by how much I enjoyed this book. James Patterson and his co author were able to capture the world of olympic horse competition in a story that moved along quickly."

A reader from Peabody read *Daisy Jones and the Six* by Taylor Reid: "I liked the book but struggled with having the different characters switching up to tell their story. I loved the television series which stuck close to the book."

A reader from Hopkinton read *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald: "Too tragic. I found reading it uncomfortable."

A reader from Brewster read *Emily Wilde's Encyclopaedia of Faeries* by Heather Fawcett: "This was a cute book that would make for a great cozy fall read. The romance is a bit too much of a slow burn, but the well-crafted world surrounding it makes up for it."

A reader from Halifax read *Verity* by Colleen Hoover: "A good read! It was a little spooky and scary, but characters were well done and plot made sense."

A reader from Dartmouth read *The Fraud* by Zadie Smith: "The most literary book I've read in a long time. What a voice—Charles Dickens, Virginia Woolf, but with a modern flavor."

A reader from Monson read *Barkskins* by Annie Proulx: "This was one of the best books I have read all year. Actually, I put it off because of the length 714 Pages. The story spans 1693-2016 and intertwines the lives of two families—the Duke family whose business involved trees and lumbering and manufacturing in all its forms and the Sel family Mi'kmaw trying to survive the onslaught of white settlers and become true to themselves living productive lives. The novel is intimate in detail and so very informative about all aspects of the lumbering business as well as the heartaches of Native Americans as their world changes so drastically. I was blown away by the story of forests all over the world and the greed to cut and not replace if ever we can. Fortunately, there are characters in the novel who take this issue seriously and are working to manage forests and deal with our need for trees as our climate changes radically."

A reader from Leeds read *Take My Hand* by Dolen Perkins Valdez: "I knew about the Tuskegee syphilis experiment, but I did not know about the forced sterilization of poor girls of color in the US. This book was powerful and engaging."

A reader from Melrose read *Frog and Toad: All Year* by A. Lobel: "It is a gentle classic children's book. Holds up."

A reader from WILBRAHAM read *Violeta* by Isabel Allende: "A beautifully written story told through the eyes of a strong, insightful, and wise woman. My favorite book of this year!"

A reader from Salem read *The Golem and the Jinni* by Helene Wecker: "I don't usually gravitate towards longer fantasy, but I'm so glad I ended up reading this because it was truly beautiful! A supernatural look on the immigrant communities at the turn of the century, New York, this book is full of heart wrenching and gorgeous characters. Wecker explored what it is to be out of place, to be lonely, how we can grow from our pasts, and what makes us human."

A reader from Boston read *Mad Honey* by Jodi Picoult & Jennifer Finney Boylen: "This was recommended by bhbooks.com. A lovely new bookstore in Boston. What a ride, what a read, from two very different female perspectives."

A reader from Marlborough read *Tomorrow & Tomorrow & Tomorrow* by Gabrielle Zevin: "Relationships are dynamic, we never know where they may begin, how they may end, nor how they may impact our future. I enjoying reading about the character struggles & triumphs while sticking together through the toughest moments."

A reader from Abington read *Trust* by Hernan Diaz: "Really enjoyed it and will likely go back and read it again as there were things I didn't fully pick up in the beginning of the book that I realized were important later on. Liked the story lines and the creative way Diaz wove it all together. Honestly, ending left me a little flat as it seemed to just end without wrapping up the story, but that's another reason I'll probably go back and re-read."

A reader from Lowell read *The Historian* by Elizabeth Kostova: "I found the book to written beautifully but a bit drawn out. Sometimes it took 3-4 pages to make one point."

A reader from Somerville read *The Valkyries* by Paulo Coelho: "Not very good. Some lasting ideas, but nothing happens in the book and the lessons are confusing."

A reader from Uxbridge read *A Day Late and A Dollar Short* by Terry McMillan: "This had a very emotional ending for all the characters. A lot of heavy issues happened."

A reader from Fall River read *The Cloisters* by Katy Hays: "An excellent dark academic whodunit set in one of my favorite museums. I found my sympathies kept shifting back and forth between the narrator and the other main characters. Hope this author will be writing more like this one."

A reader from Springfield read *In real life* by Cory Doctorow & Jen Wang: "An interesting look into the morality of gold farming in games, and worker's rights."

A reader from Braintree read *The River* by Peter Heller: "A Trident bookstore staff pick (online). As much character study and mystery as gripping adventure tale, this novel follows two college-age friends exploring the wilderness by canoe enroute to Hudson Bay. Vivid, even eloquent, descriptions of nature accompany details of their navigation, including, alas, some violent conflicts. An aside: researching for this month's challenge deepened my appreciation for bookstores' websites."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *The Writing Retreat* by Julia Bartz: "The Writing Retreat is an unsettling and entertaining blend of gothic/erotic horror and thriller that surrounds a group of women selected to attend a month-long writing retreat at a famous horror author's secluded estate. Full of suspense, dark twists, and sinister history, this novel kept me turning pages from start to finish."

A reader from Groveland read *Killers of the Flower moon* by David Grann: "I actually really enjoyed this book."

A reader from Brookline read *August Blue* by Deborah Levy: "Well written story of a concert pianist who is trying to regain her footing after a botched concert, while also becoming interested in her own origins. The story is a little marred by the author's heavy hand with symbolism and interior dialogue."

A reader from hampden read *i will find you* by harlan coben: "quick read, good thriller."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *A walk in the woods* by Bill bryson: "Inspired by this book! I love to hike, I hope one day I can do AT or at least a part of it."

A reader from Greenfield read *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig: "I've seen this book recommended by my library and local book stores but finally decided to go for it when it was also recommended by a bookstore while on vacation. A book about living starts with dying sort of. This was a much needed read for me at a time of looking back instead of right in front of myself."

A reader from Wilmington read *All That is Mine I Carry with Me* by William Landay: "Oh, it's soooo good. The different characters are well developed, and their viewpoints about what happened are believable. Some truly great twists, too."

A reader from Beverly read *Waiting for Tom Hanks* by Kerry Winfrey: "An entertaining and relatable read, especially for women who came of age with cultural icons such as '90's rom coms or Disney or Hallmark movies. This book didn't defy expectations as much as I thought it might, but I would recommend it to other readers of contemporary fiction."

A reader from Yarmouth Port read *Vera Wong's Unsolicited Advice for Murderers* by Jesse Q. Sutanto: "I laughed out loud at the quirky Vera Wong and her ability to bring together a group of diverse people who it turns out need her just as much as she needs them."

A reader from Attleboro read *The Librarianist* by Patrick deWitt: "A retired librarian unexpectedly becomes a volunteer reader and book curator at a senior day care/residence center. The lengthy middle portion of the book is the librarian's interesting backstory."

A reader from Billerica read *The House in the Cerulean Sea* by TJ Klune: "Family is defined by love and acceptance not blood."

A reader from Beverly read *A Psalm for the Wild-Built* by Becky Chambers: "What if when robots become sentient they didn't want to take over the world but instead want to experience life outside of man-made constructs? This novella is the journey of a person trying to find their place and a robot wanting to learn more about the world its predecessors abandoned in a delightful and optimistic way."

A reader from Worcester read *Doppelgänger* by Naomi Klein: "Klein covers an amazing amount of ground in this book. From her personal doppelgänger, Naomi Wolf, to the history of anti-semitism and autism and the split between the right wing anti-vaxers and sanity."

A reader from Worcester read *The Wind Knows My Name* by Isabel Allende: “intensely emotional story dealing with Trump’s order to separate parents and children at the border. Paralleled to the Kindertransport of WWII. Moving but the story is too mundane. Same story re love plus in another setting. A disappointment.”

A reader from Methuen read *The Authenticity Project* by Clare Pooley: “A book that highlights the importance of human relationships. It also shows that things aren’t always what they seem.”

A reader from Tewksbury read *The Hen Who Dreamed She Could Fly* by Sun-Mi Hwang: “A delightful little book about dreams fulfilled.”

A reader from Wilbraham read *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride: “In the 1930s, in a poor community in rural PA, Jewish immigrants and African-Americans from the south live together, mostly in harmony, in a hostile environment of small-town white America, angry over the changes they are seeing in their community. The Jewish owners of the only grocery store in the neighborhood protect a young deaf black child who the state wants to institutionalize. After he is taken by the state, the community plans and successfully carries out a plot to free him from the “school” where he resides. Excellent writing, intriguing storyline with many connections to today’s issues. Highly recommended.”

A reader from WAKEFIELD read *The Vaster Wilds* by Lauren Groff: “I use IndieBound as my most-trusted 'local' bookseller. This was the September #1 Next Read on the Indie Next List. So well-written, fascinating read.”

A reader from Hudson read *The 57 Bus* by Dashka Slater: “Heartbreaking and heartwarming at the exact same time!”

A reader from West Yarmouth read *Painting the Light* by Sally Cabot Gunning: “A great historical fiction read set on Martha's Vineyard in the 1800's, with some twists, some suffragettes, and a sheep farm, really enjoyed it! On another note, this was recommended to me by someone at Books by the Sea on the Cape, which in the meantime, has closed forever. Shop local! Use your library for most of the books you want to read, but buy gifts and special books from local sellers. :)”

A reader from Hadley read *Thistlefoot* by GennaRose Nethercott: “Ian of Book Lovers bookshop in Brattleboro recommended this one to me. It's a reimagining of the Babba Yaga tale set in present-day Brattleboro. It was a fun read, especially since I used to live in Bratt--definitely not something I would have normally picked up.”

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Golden Girl* by Elin Hilderbrand: “Fun little breezy beach read.”

A reader from Dracut read *Even Though I Knew the End* by C. L. Polk: “This was a first for me - a fantastical noir. It was fine, but it also confirmed that I'm not a huge fan of that genre.”

A reader from Leverett read *Our Missing Hearts* by Celeste Ng: “A compelling account of a dystopian America with disturbing similarities to the real thing. Not a pleasant thing to read, but well written and thought provoking, like her other books.”

A reader from Scituate read *The Change* by Kristin Miller: “This woman empowerment novel was recommended by Buttonwood Books in Cohasset. It was a sharp mix of the power of women and their friendships against the evil of men and power systems.”

A reader from East Falmouth read *Killers of the Flower Moon* by David Grann: "Although published in 2017, this book is featured at my local bookshop in Mashpee Commons due to the current release of the movie. While emotionally draining due to the tragic nature of the callous treatment of our native people, I found the reading captivating."

A reader from Quincy read *Legends & Lattes* by Travis Baldree: "It was cute."

A reader from South Hadley read *The Fall of Whit Rivera* by Crystal Maldonado: "It was super cute! It made me want to go out and do fall activities."

A reader from Northampton read *The Fervor* by Alma Katsu: "Dark sci fi based around the Japanese internment camps. Haven't read anything like it before."

A reader from Basking Ridge read *Zero Days* by Ruth Ware: "Started off strong but quickly went down hill."

A reader from AMHERST read *Tom Lake* by Ann Patchett: "Set during the pandemic, a finely written novel about life choices."

A reader from Chicopee read *Little Monsters* by Adrienne Brodeur: "Story of a complicated family and their buried secrets as it leads up to a patriarchs 70th birthday. Set in Cape Cod."

A reader from Lunenburg read *The House in the Cerulean Sea* by T J Klune: "In every family, in every neighborhood, in every town there is a House in the Cerulean Sea. In this book, all the 'others' become beloved, familiar characters. An absolutely wonderful read!"

A reader from Amesbury read *The Luis Ortega Survival Club* by Sonora Reyes: "A very well written book that deals with a difficult subject well. It's great to see such a diverse cast of characters."

A reader from Attleboro read *Nothing to See Here* by Kevin Wilson: "Really unusual story about parental love. So many people have told me they loved this book."

A reader from Amherst read *Tom Lake* by Ann Patchett: "During the Pandemic Lara's three daughters move back home to their family cherry farm in Michigan. While living and working with their parents they want to hear the story of their mother's short-lived career as a stage actor in summer stock where she had a relationship with a man who became a famous actor. The story is revealed over time although Lara keeps some things to herself. It is a story of the past, present and future for all of them. A story of being young and in love, friendship, loyalty, and family ties."

A reader from Forestdale read *The Drowned Woods* by Emily Lloyd-Joned: "Just when I was really getting into it, it ended. I love fantasy Literature."

A reader from Monson read *This is How you Lose the Time War* by Amal El-Mohar: "I picked this up after seeing a tweet from a bookseller about how incredible this book was--they recommended to go in blind, and had likened it to 'walking in your neighborhood and turning the corner to suddenly find yourself in Centaurworld.' Spoiler, that's not an accurate description. But.. I'm not sure how I would describe this. It was beautiful, and reading blindly, with no idea of plot or characters or setting, allowed me to be swept away completely."

A reader from Beverly read *Positively Izzy* by Terry Libenson: "Copper Dog Books came to my school and recommended this graphic novel to me. I loved reading a book about two girls living two different lives, but go to the same school. It was interesting to read about how the two girls overcame the obstacles in their path. 4.6/5.0 stars."

A reader from Leominster read *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus: "I wanted to really like it but I found it slow in parts and heavy-handed in its lessons. I might have enjoyed it more if there wasn't such hype around it."

A reader from Hopkinton read *The Maid* by Nita Prose: "Recommended by Brookline Booksmith, Brookline, MA. I thought this book was just okay... very predictable story. Very little nuance--characters were either all good or all bad. A quick read though."

A reader from Needham read *Lost Daughter* by Elena Ferrante: "I found this book a very thought provoking read. It was not a fun read, though I enjoyed Ferrante's prose, but to me, it was a meaningful one."

A reader from Beverly read *I'm Glad My Mom Died* by Jennette McCurdy: "It was a good read."

A reader from Dracut read *The Lost Library* by Rebecca Stead: "Although a YA book, this book had me hooked from the beginning. Fun read!"

A reader from Melrose read *King of Pride* by Ana Huang: "It was a good time, opposites attract, MF romance. Reading about how Kai and Isabella got together was enjoyable but I wasn't a big fan of Isabella and often wished she was written differently. She got in her own way a lot."

A reader from SCITUATE read *October, or Autumnal Tints* by Henry David Thoreau: "This beautiful book was recommended by both a bookseller in Concord and the tour guide who teaches about Thoreau. It is filled with Thoreau's wisdom and luscious watercolors by Lincoln Perry. It is a perfect fall companion."

A reader from Chelmsford read *The Diary of a Bookseller* by Shaun Bythell: "Attached is a photo of the recommendation from a bookseller at The Concord Bookshop, Concord, MA, a favorite independent bookstore. A funny book detailing a year in the extremely interesting life of a Scottish used bookseller."

A reader from Berkley read *The End of Her* by Shari Lapena: "It was a fun thriller with some surprising twists."

A reader from Norwell read *Shelf Life: Chronicles of a Cairo Bookseller* by Nadia Wassef: "I read this along with *Once Upon a Tome: The Misadventures of a Rare Bookseller*, because it was fascinating to get two stories of work lives from such very different vantage points. Nadia Wassef is a twice divorced woman opening bookshops in Cairo, and Oliver Darkshire, author of *Once Upon a Tome*, is a gay, married London resident. Nadia's story is interwoven with information about her personal life, Egypt's culture, and world literature, and I'm in awe of her persistence and bravery in confronting the oppression of women, censorship, and cultural traditions in running her businesses. Darkshire's book is lighter and more superficial, but entertaining and quite light and witty. Good reads!"

A reader from Braintree read *The Second Chance of Benjamin Waterfalls* by James Bird: "Well written. I like how it acknowledged that it's hard work to become a better person."

A reader from Amherst read *White Horse* by Erika T. Wurth: "This book was purchased while on vacation at the Cape, featured on the website for Sea Wolf Books. I liked the feisty Urban Native heroine. The plot was engaging and well-executed."

A reader from Northfield read *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus: "This book was recommended to me by the owner of World Eye Bookshop in Greenfield. Loved it! The cast of characters was great and there were several LOL moments. It was amazing how Elizabeth was able to relate chemistry to cooking. And it was sad she was prevented from doing research because she was a woman."

A reader from Beverly read *Manhunt* by Gretchen Felker-Martin: "Wow! What a journey. I loved exploring the lives of trans folks and then setting that amid an apocalyptic universe (set where I grew up no less) was fascinating. Very dark and grim but still with moments of humor and romance. Thanks to Copper Dog Books in Beverly for the recommendation!"

A reader from Reading read *The Exiles* by Christina Baker Kline: "A grim but interesting story about the transport program that brought convicted prisoners to Australia in the 1800s, and the lives of several women prisoners, the adopted daughter of one, and a native girl who are thrust into the lives of the English who are settled there."

A reader from East Bridgewater read *Stealing* by Margaret Verble: "This book came highly recommended from a local bookseller, so I had high expectations, but I struggled to enjoy this one. I appreciated the Native American representation and a spunky narrator like Kit, but I expected a lot more resolution than the book offered and struggled to read the repeated sexual abuse she endured."

A reader from Brookline read *The Crane Husband* by Kelly Barnhill: "One of the strangest books I've read in a while. Beautiful writing about visual art but I found myself a bit adrift in the symbolism and its potentialities."

A reader from Scituate read *Friends, Lovers and that Big Terrible Thing* by Matthew Perry: "Sad story of what addiction can cause coupled with fears of abandonment."

A reader from Leominster read *Raising Lazarus: Hope, Justice and the Future of America's Overdose Crisis* by Beth Macy: "This book was both heartbreaking and eye-opening. It really helped me understand the depth of the opioid crisis in our country. A very sobering read, but highly recommended."

A reader from Melbourne read *The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry* by Gabrielle Levin: "Recommended by the bookstore on Cape Cod where the movie was filmed, Parnassus Books. I was expecting a better book. Don't only good books get made into films anymore? The bookstore is great, book is not."

A reader from Sagamore Beach read *The Unmaking of June Farrow* by Adrienne Young: "Recommended by staff at Titcomb's book store, it is a mystery involving a murder, has time travel and a bit of a love story. Great read."

A reader from Irvine CA read *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* by Gabrielle Zevin: "Best seller for good reason. Do not be put off by the background of video game design. This is a great novel."

A reader from Fairhaven read *Doctors and distillers: the remarkable medicinal history of beer, wine, spirits, and cocktails* by English, Camper: "This was recommended to me after I mentioned really

enjoying 'The Drunken Botanist.' This one did not disappoint! Informative, historic, fun, recipes included. It was all the things you want from a nonfiction book about the history of alcohol as medicine."

A reader from Medford read *Rough sleepers* by Tracy Kidder: "Tough stuff but good to learn about the Street Team from MGH told through the stories of the homeless under the sights of Boston and their survival."

A reader from RANDOLPH read *Small Mercies* by Dennis Lehane: "This is gritty story about a family in South Boston in 1974 when the all white enclave of Southie was facing court-ordered desegregation by busing black kids to Southie public schools. Dennis Lehane captures the tension, hatred, violence and fear that filled Southie everyday life then. Reading about similar events happening in the present, is sad and humbling- that history repeats itself."

A reader from Uxbridge read *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig: "This book took the concept of living through books to another level."

A reader from Beverly read *Rolling Warrior* by Judith Heumann: "This is my new favorite book. I got it at my school's book fair after someone helped me pick it out and it is so good! It's about a protesting disabled person who helps spark a revolution. Her name is Judy Heumann and with other protesters standing with her they get what they need after sleeping in an office building for over a week."

A reader from BELCHERTOWN read *The Ride Of Her Life* by Elizabeth Letts: "A true story of Annie Wilkins, a sixty-three-year-old farmer from Maine, who decided to ride her horse to the west coast to see the Pacific in 1954. Book shares her experiences as she heads westward. GREAT read, but! Get some tissue towards the end."

A reader from Northampton read *Breath* by James Nestor: "Left me breathless."

A reader from Rockland read *Symphony of Secrets* by Brendan Slocumb: "My local indie bookstore recommended this since I had enjoyed the author's debut novel so much. A music professor and a tech wizard combine their skills to decode the mystery surrounding the lost opera, the composer, and the hidden genius."

A reader from Middleboro read *Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng: "I thought it was a great character study and an interesting story. The author explores the idea of motherhood and how you can't be perfect. Being a mom is about sacrifice, about all of your past clouding your child's present. I liked the contrast/comparison of a creative person to a routine, all-thought-out person."

A reader from WILBRAHAM read *The Dressmaker* by Kate Alcott: "The story is set in 1912 and is about some who were survivors on the Titanic. Some of the characters were actual people although it was a work of fiction."

A reader from Providence read *Scorched Grace* by Margot Douaihy: "A mystery that took me by surprise. Both by the way I connected with the characters and the very unexpected ending."

A reader from Braintree read *Our Missing Hearts* by Celeste Ng: "Pervasive anti-Asian government policies and book banning force a poet / mother to leave her family in order to keep them safe. Dystopia but not unimaginable in the current landscape. Loved it."

A reader from Essex read *The Firekeeper's Daughter* by Angeline Boulley: "Loved this book! Well written with a very likeable main character who struggles with living between two different cultures."

A reader from Randolph read *Mrs Planskys revenge* by Spenser Quinn: "A light and fanciful tale with a storyline that brings hope when the situation seems hopeless."

A reader from Salem read *How to Sell a Haunted House* by Grady Hendrix: "It's been along time since I read a horror story. This one was super creepy, but very well written. It definitely kept me guessing!"

A reader from Weymouth read *Princess Mary The First Modern Princess* by Elisabeth Basford: "I loved Princess Mary."

A reader from Pepperell read *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid: "Loved this book. I missed the characters when I finished the book. Had to savor it before I could begin my next one."

A reader from North Reading read *The House In The Cerulean Sea* by TJ Klune: "I liked this book more than I thought I would. If anyone else reads this, Chauncey is the greatest!"

A reader from Belchertown read *The Memoirs of Stockholm Sven* by Nathaniel Ian Miller: "Written as a memoir it is the story of a man and the people he ultimately connects to in a stunning but unforgiving environment. Told with humor and stark reality highly recommended."

A reader from Plainville read *Ella Minnow Pea* by Mark Dunn: "This was a challenge to read, since it is about a town where various letters of the alphabet are banned and the residents must learn to speak without them. Took time to figure out the meaning, but a good read for anyone who is a "word nerd" like the local bookstore employee who recommended it to me."

A reader from Melrose read *Exiles* by Jane Harper: "Exiles (#3 in the Aaron Falk series--do read #1 and #2) has provoked a ton of emotions in myself and should do so in others. Closure is a fine panacea for what may ail people!"

A reader from Rochester read *The tattooist of Auschwitz* by Heather morris: "Great recommendation. This story will in your for a long time. Definitely read it."

A reader from Dracut read *Where We Go When All We Were Is Gone* by Sequoia Magamatsu: "Recommended by lala Books in Lowell MA."

A reader from Rochester read *The Honey Bus: A Memoir of Loss, Courage and a Girl Saved by Bees* by Meredith May: "I found this book on the staff picks shelf at The Concord Bookshop (great store!). The Honey Bus is a simultaneously heart-wrenching and heartwarming memoir that had me rooting for the author right from the beginning. A beautiful book about our interconnectedness with each other, the natural world, and our ability to learn, grow, and make different choices so that we can thrive - as individuals and as part of a bigger whole."

A reader from West Barnstable read *The Invisible Hour* by Alice Hoffman: "Not a book I would have gravitated to without the recommendation from my favorite booksellers (2 gave it a thumbs up) but I enjoyed the New England setting, the time travelling aspect and the ties to Nathaniel Hawthorne."

A reader from Ludlow read *A Court of Thorns and Roses* by Sarah Maas: "I am a sci-fi/fantasy fan (Trekkie, Tolkien) and saw her books displayed all over. Did not enjoy as much as expected--a little "over the top" for me, violent, and overly complex made work. Not motivated to read any more of hers. Grateful for challenge tho, new horizons."

A reader from Tewksbury read *Responding to the Right* by Nathan J. Robinson: "It was very interesting to see a point-by-point argument against conservative arguments that are often boiled down to a simple but wrong premise. Recommended by Lala Books, Lowell, MA."

A reader from Oakham read *A Feast of Losses: Yetta Dine and Her Son, the Poet Stanley Kunitz* by Juthis Ferrara: "Jo at TidePool Bookshop in Worcester recommended this. So many local connections! Deeply researched, but engaging reading, even for someone not very knowledgeable about the Kunitz history in Worcester. We get to know Yetta, as a caring, ambitious, intelligent woman who cherished her family and overcame adversity --despite her son's depiction of her in his poetry and interviews as cold, demanding, and downtrodden. Stanley Kunitz immortalized his mother in a single slap across the face (in 'The Portrait'), but Ferrara's book bring her to life as a complex person who led a full life, despite her 'Feast of Losses.'"

A reader from Plymouth read *The Bone Shard Daughter* by Andrea Stewart: "An incredibly fun read that I just couldn't put down! I want to go back to the bookstore I bought it from just to shake the hand of the girl who recommended it to me. Hopefully I'll get the chance when I pick up the rest of the books from this series. Love love love love love."

A reader from Wakfield read *The Last Love Note* by Emma Grey: "This book was heart breaking, hopeful, romantic, funny and one I would recommend to everyone. The main character is a young widow navigating a life she never imagined or wanted, and her journey towards finding joy again. Recommended by a local bookstore and I just loved it."

A reader from WAKEFIELD read *All My Rage* by Sabaa Tahir: "Heartbreaking and full of heart. I thought the author was writing herself into a corner, but the resolution was satisfying without feeling forced. Gives you a lot to reflect on, and characters you will love."

A reader from Brockton read *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt: "I was skeptical about reading a book with an octopus as a character but this was a great story! I really enjoyed it."

A reader from Springfield read *The Last Apothecary* by Sarah Penner: "I chose to read *The Last Apothecary* by Sarah Penner off of #barnesandnoble list of Discover Picks of the Month online. I really enjoyed this book. All three perspectives were really interesting and had me invested. I recommend this read for others!"

A reader from Lee read *The Road to Roswell* by Connie Willis: "This was a fun time. Alien shenanigans, fun characters, romance- it's got it all."

A reader from Burlington read *Daughter of the Moon Goddess* by Sue Lynn Tan: "I was not a fan of this book, especially the love triangle which felt very forced. Not much character growth either."

A reader from Bourne read *The Last Devil to Die* by Richard Osma: "I love this series. My book club loves this series. The characters are wonderful and fully developed."

A reader from Hadley read *Beautiful Boy* by David Sheff: "This account is a wrenching story but a helpful and honest one."

A reader from Santa Cruz read *Murder on the Left Bank* by Cara Black: "I've read a few in the series and enjoy moving around Paris with the characters. This one went into detail about the cause her father's death and I also thought it was interesting seeing a young woman operating her own detective agency and handling the demands of a small child."

A reader from Marstons Mills read *The Rabbit Hutch* by Tess Gunty: "I couldn't get through this. I kept trying and I'd like it, but then I would feel bored. I grew angsty over the very small font coupled with how many pages I had left. I felt like it was disjointed and then other times go into extreme detail over mundane things. One of the characters vacillates between being present to her life but also checking out of life. Like I said, too disjointed."

A reader from Northampton read *Scorched Grace* by Margot Douaihy: "What do I think about this book? Well, I am looking forward to reading the next Sister Holiday Mystery - Blessed Water which comes out in 2024, so truly I liked it! Good writing, a twisty, OMG plot, contemporary topics and characters with depth - plus the bonus of Sister Holiday's wit and a perfect book cover illustration. Thanks to the wonderful Broadside Bookshop in Northampton for the recommendation."

A reader from Hampden read *Signal Fires* by Dani Shapiro: "A quick read other interesting connections and what happens after death."

A reader from Beverly read *High Times in the Low Parliament* by Kelly Robson: "The world building had some very interesting inclusions that were presented as sort of givens. It added to the silliness and made for a fun if weird dream."

A reader from Chicopee read *Whalefall* by Daniel Kraus: "Jay Gardiner goes diving for his father's remains, only to be swallowed by a whale with only an hour and half of oxygen left. A fascinating story of how he uses his family's training to solve his inner conflict with his father and escape from the whale."

A reader from Weymouth read *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus: "I loved this book. Characters were strong and relatable."

A reader from Amherst read *The Inheritors* by Eve Fairbanks: "Very compelling portrait of several South Africans, black-and-white, and their experiences before, and after the end of apartheid."

A reader from Beverly read *Murder Your Employer* by Rupert Holmes: "Written as a text book, this comedic book uses case studies to share the stories of three students."

A reader from Erving read *The Book of Dust, Volume 1, La Belle Sauvage* by Philip Pullman: "I was drawn in quickly to the adventures of young Malcolm, his daemon Asta and their attempts to save baby Lyra from enemies. The book is full of adventure fantasy, love and caring. It was recommended by the owner of Greenfield Books, Greenfield, Mass."

A reader from Beverly read *For Butter or Worse* by Erin La Rosa: "A serviceable rom-com enemies turned lovers book. Doesn't reinvent the genre, but it's an enjoyable enough read."

A reader from YARMOUTH PORT read *This is Happiness* by Niall Williams: "A book with a slow moving story line, You need to be familiar with catholic traditions to enjoy the book. The book concentraters on characters rather than a story line."

A reader from Hartland read *Sea of Tranquility* by Emily St. John Mandel: "Excellent science fiction story."

A reader from Ipswich read *The river we remember : a novel* by Wiliam Kent Krueger: "Excellent storyteller. I didn't want to the story to end."

A reader from Belchertown read *Romantic Comedy* by Curtis Sittenfeld: "This book was recommended to me by an Odyssey bookseller through their website, and I really enjoyed it! A lot of the intentional comedy felt pretty contrived, but the love story was sweet, and the relationships felt real."

A reader from Springfield read *The Things We.Canoot Say* by Kelly Rimmer: "Great story during the WWII of not being a Jew. Seeing the struggles of what they went through."

A reader from Medford read *Early Morning Riser* by Katherine Heiny: "I can't remember which bookstore website's Staff Picks (Porter Square Books or Bunch of Grapes) recommended this book, but I'd never heard of the author and decided to give this a go. I'm so glad I did! I thoroughly enjoyed this delightful book, with its depictions of ordinary life in a community of caring, flawed human beings. Some readers may find this sort of book dull, but I loved it and came across many sections that I wanted to read out loud to my husband because they were so wonderfully descriptive or laugh-out-loud funny."

A reader from Melrose read *A Deadly Education* by Naomi Novik: "Fun dark academia YA to read with the kids. The outwardly snarky and cynical lead felt more real than the characters in some other magic school books. 3.5/5."

A reader from Bolton read *Love and Saffron* by Kim Fay: "This was a really lovely book told via letters between two friends in the 60's. I listened to the audio which I think was perfect for a story told in this format."

A reader from Franklin read *Hour of the Witch* by Chris Bohjalian: "This was a great book. This book generates a range of emotions. Although set well in the past, it still seems relevant today."

A reader from East Weymouth read *Berry Pickers* by Amanda Peters: "A 4 year old Mi'kmaq girl goes missing while blueberry picking with her family. Her family is devastated but can't find her and get no help from authorities. The girl is raised by white parents who love her but also smother her with caution. Told from her perspective and also her brother's. Great read!"

A reader from Salem read *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood: "This has been in my TBR pile for years, but I've always put it off due to a sense of dread with which I associate it. Having now read it, I'm feeling pretty justified about my procrastination. Poetically written, but absolutely dread-inducing."

A reader from Stoneham read *Twenty Years Later* by Charlie Donlea: "Fun mystery, kept me guessing longer than most books. The atmosphere was tense."

A reader from Weymouth read *Little Monsters* by Adrienne Brodeur: "Little Monsters is a complex study of family love. Each characters has their own perception and memories of interactions within the family. The author has skillfully interwoven friendship, loyalty, understanding, and pride in presenting her characters."

A reader from Attleboro read *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig: "Matt Haig shows us we are all full of potential to live the lives we have rather than carry the baggage of regrets for paths not followed in our past."

A reader from Wakefield read *The Magic Strings of Frankie Presto* by Mitch Albom: "Fantastic! It was part fantasy but the story was so engaging, I almost believed it. Highly recommend."

A reader from Lowell read *My Heart is a Chainsaw* by Stephen Graham Jones: "I'm not the biggest slasher fan but I do love a good thriller, and this one did not disappoint. The MC is caught up in her own trauma with an actual killer on the loose PLUS a supernatural aspect I didn't see coming. Loved it!"

A reader from READING read *Murder your Employer* by Rupert Holmes: "I loved this book! Interesting and funny, a reverse murder mystery."

A reader from Amherst read *Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow* by Gabrielle Zevin: "A beautiful story about the power of creativity and a gorgeous rumination about life, death, and legacy, the fact that this book kept me hooked from the beginning to the end despite not being a gamer myself, is a testament to the size of its feat."

A reader from Lowell read *Cursebreakers* by Madeline nakamura: "A great interpretation of mental illness in a fantasy setting."

A reader from Lowell read *A Court of Thorns and Roses* by Sarah J. Maas: "I've been recommended to read this book over and over and over again and finally took the plunge.... And I regret not doing it sooner! I loved the female lead in the story and the perfect blend of romance and fantasy. Can't wait to read the rest of the series."

A reader from Taunton read *Death by Chocolate Marshmallow Pie* by Sarah Graves: "Suggested because I have read others by this author. Believable characters, excellent writing, some unexpected twists, and you can almost smell chocolate as you read. Unfortunately, book #4 in the Death by Chocolate series...need to read the earlier books!"

A reader from Malden read *Trust* by Hernan Diaz: "I found it a very painful book to read."

A reader from Harwich read *A Piece of the World* by Christina Baker Kline: "Loved it! Recommended by Brewster Book Store in Brewster, MA. I have loved Andrew Wyeth's paintings and this is a novel based on Christina in several of his paintings."

A reader from Norton read *Oh William!* by Elizabeth Strout: "There were no chapters, just brief entries filled with raw emotion, questioning one's worth and relationship to others. A lot of self-reflection occurred, and ultimately growth, as the book came to a close. I really enjoyed my time spent with Lucy Barton!"

A reader from Beverly read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: "Claire Keegan writes of daily kindnesses which she says are the small things that when added up amount to a life well lived. May we all show others the kindness we ourselves would like to receive. Happy holidays to all!"

A reader from Wilmington read *Vera Wong's Unsolicited Advice for Murderer's* by Jesse Q Sutanto: "A tale of community and new friendships coming together in times of need. Interesting dynamics between different ages."

A reader from Franklin read *The Faerie Path* by Frewin Jones: "A fun quick read with a great take on the link between the normal world and the Faerie world. Predictable characters and story workings but fun and relaxing to read."

A reader from Abington read *Trust* by Hernan Diaz: "Really enjoyed it. Without disclosing too much I'll just say I liked the stories themselves and the way they intersected. Will likely go back and read it again. Having gotten through it I think I missed clues along the way as to HOW the stories would intersect, and want to go back and compare the various tellings."

A reader from Rochester read *Taste my life through food* by Stanley tucci: "After living in Italy for 10 years, I enjoyed the references to Italy and it's food."

A reader from Sandwich read *The Invisible Hour* by Alice Hoffman: "I really liked this book. It was a good storyline with surprises along the way. It made you think about your own life and what you take as being important."

A reader from Enfield read *The Mouse and the Motorcycle* by Beverly Cleary: "I teach 5th grade and this book was recommended to me. It was a great coming of age story. I liked how the story was mostly told from the mouse's point of view."

A reader from Sunderland read *The Boat Who Wouldn't Float* by Farley Mowat: "This was a charming story of a man and his boat navigating the waters of Newfoundland in the late 1960's. The writer's style reminds me a little bit of Bill Bryson - engaging, sometimes snarky, and warm-hearted. The book was on Steve's recommended books list at Broadside Books in Northampton."

A reader from East Taunton read *Babel* by RF Kuang: "I have to admit that I was initially smitten by the cover and committed to reading it when it came out in paperback. The story is so well written. I could feel what the characters feel. I love the little etymological tidbits throughout the book."

A reader from Attleboro read *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride: "Great ending!"

A reader from Sandwich read *The Collector* by Daniel Silva: "A fictional story that revolves around the actual theft of a priceless Vermeer painting titled 'The Concert' that was stolen from Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum over 30 years earlier and never recovered. A fascinating look at the underworld's machinations re stolen art treasures."

A reader from Lynnfield read *Everyone in My Family Has Killed Someone* by Benjamin Stevenson: "Fun murder mystery read. This book self-consciously plays with the classic and "golden age" murder mystery novel rules and tropes. The main character and narrator routinely breaks the fourth wall, which is a style that I often don't like but I thought it worked well in this novel."

A reader from Weymouth read *The House Guest* by Hank Phillippi Ryan: "I grew up watching Hank Phillippi Ryan as an investigative reporter on the Boston NBC station and her storytelling skills extend to works of fiction. The House Guest was a well-researched thriller with scenes so descriptive you feel like you are there with the characters. Titcomb's Bookshop in Sandwich recommended this novel and I recommend it as well."

A reader from Middleboro read *No Strangers Here* by Carlene O'Connor: "This book took me a little while to get in to. I also was a bit confused at the end with what exactly happened."

A reader from Amesbury read *Regretting You* by Colleen Hoover: "It was very engaging. I liked hearing the characters different viewpoints. Couldn't put it down!"

A reader from Westborough read *A Council of Dolls* by Mona Susan Power: "A multigenerational story told by 3 Yanktonai Dakota women and their dolls. A very powerful telling of generational pain and healing."

A reader from Weymouth read *15 Ways to Live Longer and Healthier* by Joel Osteen: "A positive spin on living a good life."

A reader from Worcester read *Take My Hand* by Dolen Perkins-Valdez: "This book was so well written on a topic that is often not easy to discuss. It was so thought provoking and moving. I will recommend this book to others."

A reader from HAMPDEN read *Mrs. Kimble* by Jennifer Haigh: "Great writing. I felt like I knew the characters. Reminded me of another book."

A reader from Reading read *Little Monsters* by Adrienne Brodeur: "Set in Cape Cod, a story of family dynamics and relationships as a family gathers to celebrate a 70th birthday. Evocative, intriguing, and recommended."

A reader from Woods Hole read *Cape Cod Noir* by Multiple Authors: "Living on the Cape made this doubly interesting for me. I read mysteries, but the Noir genre is different. Good stories that took me to a different place in my reading vocabulary."

A reader from Chicopee read *Down and Out in Paris and London* by George Orwell: "A book that challenges classist and ableist views by giving the reader a look into the service industry & homelessness. Though a good book, still holds some outdated xenophobic/racist views."

A reader from Chicopee read *Let Us Descend* by Jesmyn Ward: "A raw and haunting novel about an enslaved girl just before the Civil War. Definitely a page turner story about suffering, survival and grief."

A reader from Salem read *A Psalm For The Wild-Built* by Becky Chambers: "I enjoyed this book! It's very light and reflective, and it was good to read something that I usually don't read, since I usually read dark and heavy work."

A reader from Whately read *The Road to Dalton* by Shannon Bowring: "This story takes place in a small rural town in Maine. It includes every emotion from tragedy and sadness to kindness and hope. I felt like I knew the characters. The Reading Guide was a perfect addition to the book. I can't wait to read the sequel 'Where The Forest Meets The River.'"

A reader from Beverly read *The Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman: "I love mysteries and this one kept me guessing. I especially liked that the characters were retirees who had formed their own murder club to try to talk about unsolved crimes. And they meet in the Jigsaw Room of their retirement community - how apt."

A reader from Plainville read *Bright Lights, Big Christmas* by Mary Kay Andrews: "Such a cute Christmas book! It really got me into the Christmas spirit. I finished this in one day! I hope there is a sequel."

A reader from Boston read *Lady Tan's Circle of Women* by Lisa See: "Very interesting historical medical details."

A reader from Franklin read *No Time Like the Future* by Michael J. Fox: "This is a very honest look at Fox's life these days, which is not easy, obviously, due to the progression of his Parkinson's. But this book is not meant to be a 'pity party.'" It is truthful and sensitive. I had no idea Fox had been through so much and I admire how much he has done to create and continue his foundation. He is a really special human."

A reader from Wellesley read *The Free People's Village* by Sim Kern: "This book is an interesting alternative history that digs deep into racial injustice. Not my favorite read ever, but well worth it."

A reader from Hopedale read *The Locked Door* by Freida McFadden: "Picked up this book recommended by the owner of Love Your Shelf in Bellingham. My first Freida McFadden book, very popular on my Thriller Book Lovers Facebook group. The twists were very good and it was a quick read for me!"

A reader from Fitchburg read *I'm Glad my Mom Died* by Jennette McCurdy: "This book was very difficult to listen to but was also very eye opening."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Anxious People* by Fredrik Backman: "Quirky, funny, real. Likeable characters, with moments that made you feel and moments that made you laugh."

A reader from Andover read *Fierce Attachments* by Vivian Gornick: "This is a terrific memoir where Gornick recounts coming of age in New York in the 1950's as well as her adult life in the city. Gornick's complex relationship with her mother and her desire for individuation are central to the memoir."

A reader from Rochester read *The Lioness of Boston* by Emily Franklin: "Loved the references to places and events that were developing in that era, as well as catching the spirit of this remarkable woman."

A reader from Leominster read *Lessons in Chemistry: a novel* by Bonnie germus: "Best book I've read all year! Loved the characters and the story."

A reader from Scituate read *Parton your world* by Abbey Jimenez: "It was a fun read so much that I read the next one which I really liked."

A reader from Springfield read *The Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese: "A multigenerational epic set in India. Heartwarming and heartrending in places, tge story spans several generations and what happens as their lives unfold. A book that had me crying in many places."

A reader from Naples read *This Time Tomorrow* by Emma Straub: "Recommended by Titcomb's Bookshop in Sandwich. Author did a webinar in November, which was quite enjoyable. Book is contemporary time travel with twists on the usual books of that genre. Written partially as a homage to the author's father Peter."

A reader from Amherst read *Among the Thugs* by Bill Buford: "Weird subculture, full of violence and this strange common language. I don't know why this guy bothered to infiltrate this organization or get the shit beaten out of him by Italian police for this, but it was a strange read. Unclear why that girl in the bookstore recommended this to me of all books."

A reader from Hampden read *The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin: "I found the flow somewhat disjointed. But, in spite of that, I enjoyed reading this quirky little book."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *The Hacienda* by Isabel Canas: "I really enjoyed Mexican Gothic, which was a comp for The Hacienda, so I had high expectations. I was not let down—the writing/imagery in this was gorgeous and I felt completely immersed in the story."

A reader from Boston/ Yarmouth read *The Measure* by Nikki Erlick: "One day, all adults receive a box with the inscription "The measure of your life lies within." each containing a string that measures the length of each person's life. This compelling story follows eight characters as they each decide whether or not to open their box and how to lead their lives once they are aware of their string's length."

A reader from Lynnfield read *The Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller: "I liked the main characters and its themes of mortality and pride, but I wasn't loving the writing. It was overall one of those books where I didn't really see the humongous hype that this book got."

A reader from Spfld read *Heart-Shaped Box* by Joe Hill: "Good characters, musical references I could relate to and some great twists and turns."

A reader from Rindge read *The Four Winds* by Kristen Hannah: "I think Hannah does a good job writing a story. How historically accurate is it, I have no clue, but as fiction it doesn't need to be."

A reader from Attleboro read *All Creation Waits: The Advent Mystery of New Beginnings* by Gayle Boss: "All Creation Waits has taught me more about what animals do during winter in the northern hemisphere than almost anything else I've heard or read. It also teaches the importance of waiting and of having hope during your wait - four stars."

A reader from West Whately read *American Hippo* by Sarah Gailey: "Yes, this book is fiction, however at one point the US Government actually wanted to solve its food crisis by importing & farming 'water pigs.' Loved the overall concept. Incredibly imaginative cast of characters. If you think alligators are the worst thing you might encounter in a Southern swamp or bayou think again! Hippos (as imagined by Gailey) can be terrifying!"

A reader from Northampton read *The Magicians* by Blexbolex: "It was so wonderful. Absolutely my new favorite Blexbolex book. It was also designed incredibly thoughtfully and it a beautiful book-object."

A reader from Fitchburg read *Friends, Lovers and the Big Terrible Thing* by Matthew Perry: "Extremely powerful. Heartbreaking. Humorous. The life this gentleman led is one that tugs at the heartstrings."

A reader from ROCHESTER read *Why Fish Don't Exist* by Lulu Miller: "This book came highly recommended from a favorite bookseller. I tried hard to enjoy it but it exasperated me almost beyond words. It turned out to be an indulgent overly wrought memoir/autobiography, so chaotically organized, I may have missed the point. On the plus side, it's short and is a beautifully designed book with extensive notes on each chapter and an unrelated weird treasure map exercise at the end."

A reader from Lowell read *Things have gotten worse since we last spoke and other misfortunes* by Eric LaRocca: "First story that seems to be the most famous was good but the other two were more haunting and had questions with more depth. Really enjoyed it though!"

A reader from Thorndike read *Where Darkness Blooms* by Andrea Hannah: "Interesting and creepy-- Could definitely make for a great horror movie!"

A reader from Stoneham read *Good Night From Paris* by Jane Healey: "Jane Healey is a local author. This was a fascinating story based on a real person, actress Drue Leyton Tardiere who played a sidekick in Charlie Chan movies but after marriage to a Frenchman spent WWII in France."

A reader from Northampton read *Jesus and John* by Adam McOmber: "This book was a fun, dark spin into story many people know. I found the book very entertaining."

A reader from Amherst read *Power Born of Dreams* by Mohammed Sabaaneh: "A heartbreaking and beautiful graphic memoir of Palestine. Thanks to Odyssey Books for including this in a Palestine display."

A reader from Spencer read *Atomic Anna* by Rachel Barenbaum: "This time travel book follows Anna, her daughter and granddaughter as they try to prevent Chernobyl's reactor meltdown. Great read!"

A reader from Lowell read *We Ride Upon Sticks* by Quan Barry: "Not my favorite book, slow to start/get through, though it had a few likable characters. But being set in 1980s New England with nods to witches did make it fun at times!"

A reader from Malden read *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Van Pelt, Shelby: "It was a pretty good book that intertwined the lives of multiple people with that of a giant octopus counting down the days of its life."

A reader from Greenfield read *Children on the hill* by Jennifer mcMahon: "Grilling from the very first page, I love how they play with time and perspective in this harrowing tale."

A reader from Gill read *Horse Girls* by Halimah Marcus: "I didn't like it. I thought it would be more about horses. It was strange. I would not recommend it."

A reader from Sandwich read *Hello Beautiful* by Ann Napolitano: "A very beautiful book about family and love, both lost and then found, and about surviving ourselves."

A reader from middleboro read *the medical examiner* by James Patterson with Maxine Paetro: "this book belongs with the women's murder club books. imagine waking up in the cold drawer of the morgue. Joan Murphy did, and it was up to the team of detectives, the ME, and ace reporter Cindy to find the answers."

A reader from Hanson read *The Chocolate Maker's Wife* by Karen Brooks: "I like the time period of the late 1600's with a strong woman managing a Chocolate House as they were becoming increasingly popular."

A reader from Plainville read *The Berry Pickers* by Amanda Peters: "A neat follow up after our family vacation to Maine and Nova Scotia this summer."

A reader from Attleboro read *Mercury Pictures Presents* by Anthony Marra: "The story was difficult to follow and I was never able to feel a connection to the characters. I did not appreciate the amount of difficult vocabulary that felt unnecessary to the story."

A reader from Erving read *Nightbitch* by Rachel Yoder: "Sadly I did not finish. The book did not speak to me."

A reader from Lancaster read *Bunny* by Mona Awad: "What a wild ride. I wasn't sure whether it was real or not, and the ending left me with more questions than answers. Would definitely recommend if you're into books that take you on acid trips."

A reader from Dracut read *Yellowface* by R. F. Kuang: "A great book that highlights the struggles of underrepresented voices in the publishing industry."

A reader from Somerville read *Claude and Camille* by Stephanie Cowell: "I really enjoyed this book. After seeing Monet's work and paintings of his wife at the MFA, I was inspired to learn more about the woman behind the painting. This was their love story with all its messiness, passion, and faults."

A reader from Wilmington read *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins: "The story kept me engaged from beginning to end. Although it was fiction, it left me with mixed emotions about our own migrant situation going on now."

A reader from Spencer read *The Anthropocene Reviewed* by John Green: "This came HIGHLY recommended by someone at Tidepool Bookshop (372 Chandler St, Worcester) It definitely deserved the high praise it was given. I give both *The Anthropocene Reviewed* and Tidepool Bookshop 5 stars."

A reader from Westford read *The Screaming Staircase* by Jonathan Stroud: "I really enjoyed the book, although I found it a little slow. A very fascinating premise with good twists and turns."

A reader from Easthampton read *City on the Horizon: Nonets* by Jason R. Montgomery: "Direct, contemplative, emotional poems written in an interesting, accessible form."

A reader from SOUTH YARMOUTH read *Julia* by Sandra Newman: "This is the retelling of George Orwell's 1984 from Julia's perspective. It was disturbing as all dystopian stories are, but it was very well written. Would I recommend that you read it? Only if you are a fan of this type of book."

A reader from Stanford read *Verity* by Coleen Hoover: "I loved the book, a page turner. Many twists and a surprising ending kept me interested."

A reader from Plymouth read *Butch Hijab Blues* by Lamya H: "A excellent exploration of faith, queerness and understanding of self."

A reader from Worcester read *You Made a Fool of Death with Your Beauty* by Akwaeke Emezi: "The dialogue in the book was so beautiful and realistic. I also loved the descriptions of the Caribbean food peppered throughout the book."

A reader from Hudson read *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks: "This well-written narrative that goes back in forth in time is one to recommend to fellow book lovers! Taking on topics of horseracing, art history and racial issues, Geraldine Brooks looks at the American classes in the antebellum South and how racism and privilege continue to exist in today's society. *Horse* is an informative, heart-wrenching novel that elucidates the moving relationship between a man and a prize-winning horse. I found it well-researched and a delightful read."

A reader from Amherst read *Our Missing Hearts* by Celeste Ng: "Beautifully written novel about the dangers of a 'nanny state', Asian American discrimination, and fear of alternative points of view. In some ways, the book hits too close to home as we move towards a more authoritarian state deciding which

books we cannot read. Timely, well written, great story. A brave young boy, an equally brave mother and father resist in the only ways they can.”

A reader from Lunenburg read *Sorrow and bliss* by Meg mason: “Beautiful story recommended by a bookseller friend.”

A reader from Centerville read *The wind know my name* by Isabel Allende: “Isabel Allende writes the truth as it is, sometimes brutal and sad, sometimes happy. This novel was really good, heartbreaking at times.”

A reader from STOUGHTON read *The Woman in the Library* by Sulari Gentill: “Loved the characters and the setting of Boston!”

A reader from Nantucket read *Salt Path* by Raynor Winn: “This title was a contender for our One Book One Island choice and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Down on their luck, with nowhere to go, an older couple like my husband and myself take on a hiking challenge around the coast of England. Although I did not read this particular title this year, I did recently complete the third in the series, which takes place in Scotland, which is where I bought it at a local independent bookseller!”

A reader from Wakefield read *The Shadow of the Wind* by Carlos Ruiz Zafon: “Oh I had such fun reading this book! The story was such a ride, full of twists and surprises, and really draws you in. Just a great reading experience overall!”

A reader from Wilmington read *Killing Floor* by Lee Child: “I dont normally read these types of books because i think they are what i called "airport fiction" really popular books that hang at airport bookstores that people buy just to pass the time on a plane ride. The bookstore person liked it and said it was "graphic". i have watched the tom cruise movie and heard of the amazon show that's about as much as i know about jack reacher. so i took a chance and read it. It wasn't as graphic as she proclaimed or maybe i'm used to more in fiction. the story is a pretty cookie cutter "man without a name" archetypal gunslinger who wheels into town solves all their issues then moves on. Having said all of that, i will say i can see why it has captivated many readers and why it is popular. it is a quick and breezy read, you dont really need to think about the book too much, guy comes in, is the hero, can perceive several steps ahead of everyone else in the town, takes out the corruption and baddies and has a side romance all along then gets out of town. but i can see why it has inspired multiple sequels. still.... it's just not something that i typically dip into, i remain and still love all of the classics, modern fiction has little sway over me.”

A reader from Braintree read *A Perfect Vintage* by Chelsea Fagan: “Great romance book with role reversals and age differences.”

A reader from STONEHAM read *Murder at Breakhart Hill farm* by Douglas Heath and Alison Simcox: “Good account of a local true crime.”

A reader from Quincy read *Legends & Lattes* by Travis Baldree: “It was cute. Kind of low stakes, feel good.”

A reader from Chestnut hill read *The celebrants* by Steven rowley: “No me gusta. Why did these people remain friends through the years? They seemed to all dislike each other.”

A reader from Lynnfield read *Codeless Data Structures and Algorithms* by Armstrong Subero: "Great non technical description."

A reader from Dracut read *The Monster's Bones* by David K Randall: "Books make people GO PLACES! Because of *The Monster's Bones*, I am headed to see the T. Rex skeleton at the American Museum of Natural History in NYC!! My top favorite book from this challenge. Shoutout to La La Books in Lowell for recommending. Books make people GO PLACES!"

A reader from Waltham read *Flung Out of Space* by Grace Ellis and Hannah Templer: "Interesting but I don't know that it gave me a lot of insight into Highsmith. The introductory author's note, however, was incredibly well done and a model for how we should deal with books about problematic individuals."

A reader from Marriottsville read *The Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese: "Beautifully written story. His language is lyrical. Beautiful story of family and love and the human condition."

A reader from Hartland read *Slaughterhouse-Five* by Kurt Vonnegut: "Jumpy."

A reader from Worcester read *Small World: A Novel* by Laura Zigman: "It was an interesting, well-written, slice of life story."

A reader from Topsfield read *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* by Cheryl Strayed: "I love hiking/naturalist memoirs and this book was right up my alley. This was recommended to me years ago at Northshire Books in Manchester, VT."

A reader from Amesbury read *Iron Flame* by Rebecca Yarros: "This book was a sequel of one of the most anticipated books of the year, I enjoyed this book much more than its predecessor. I think while I'm still not much of a fantasy reader this is an accessible novel to anyone looking to enjoy that genre and found this an enjoyable read."

A reader from Beverly read *Dial A For Aunties* by Jesse Q. Sutanto: "Such a fun read that made me laugh out loud. I can't remember the last time a book did that to me."

A reader from Hanson read *Mrs. Plansky's Revenge* by Spencer Quinn: "It was enjoyable, silly and refreshing as we head into the busy holiday season. It was a book recommended by our local independent book store, Storybook Cove in Hanover."

A reader from Erving read *Endless Chain* by Emile Richards: "None of the recommended books were to my liking so I chose *Endless Chain* & it's part of a series. I found this very interesting & a page turner. It was interesting how the story evolved and had many surprising twists and turns. I really enjoyed it & am looking forward to reading the other books in the series. I didn't realize it was book #2 in the series but I will be reading all of them."

A reader from Forestdale read *Fourth Wing* by Rebecca Yarros: "Incredible, could not put it down."

A reader from Falmouth read *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus: "Fabulous fun read. Great character development. A real page turner."

A reader from Hanson read *Mrs. Plansky's Revenge* by Spencer Quinn: "It was an enjoyable, silly, fun book to read as I head into the busy holiday season. It was recommended by my local Independent bookstore, Storybook Cove in Hanover."

A reader from Bolton read *Sapians* by Yuval Harari: “Really engaging look at early human history. Presenting in a compelling and interesting way.”

A reader from Sandwich read *A Certain Hunger* by Chelsea G. Summers: “I absolutely devoured this book. It's masterfully written, bone-chilling and guaranteed to keep you grimacing on the edge of your seat.”

A reader from Beverly read *The Children of Men* by P. D. James: “This book was a staff pick from Copper Dog Books in Beverly. A dystopian tale taking place 20+ years after the last human child was born. I had seen the movie, but the book was actually a bit darker, if possible. Really enjoyed the writing and moral quandaries.”

A reader from Worcester read *Trust* by Hernan Diaz: “Intelligently conceived and written, with increasing attention to what it is to write capitalism. With that question, the author could have shown even more.”

A reader from Marblehead read *The Maid* by Nita Prose: “Fun book to read, love the hidden nod to Clue in this book!”

A reader from Dracut read *The Blue Skinned Gods* by SJ Sindu: “This book was a really interesting story interwoven with Hindu lore. I enjoyed the discussion of religion and the ways in which parents influence our lives.”

A reader from East Sandwich read *Lessons* by Ian McEwan: “An interesting...a bit forward...piano teacher!!!”

A reader from East Falmouth read *Midnight at the Christmas Bookshop* by Jenny Colgan: “Love a Christmas book, always looking for a cheery book for the season.”

A reader from East Taunton read *Matilda* by Roald Dahl: “I liked this book because it was funny and had a good ending.”

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks: “I thoroughly enjoyed this historical novel centered on the most famous stallion of the 19th century, Lexington. I had not realized the pivotal roles that enslaved men played in thoroughbred care and training. A complex relationship develops between the horse and his trainer.”

A reader from Gill read *Foregone* by Russell Banks: “A local bookseller did not recommend the book. Instead, it was my next door neighbor, who used to sell books. My next door neighbor was also the author's daughter. She told me that the novel was being made into a film starring Richard Gere. Well, now I had to read it. The film's release date is still unknown. The movie will be entitled “Oh, Canada.””

A reader from Attleboro read *Brain over binge* by Katherine Hansen: “This was a good book to help people who are suffering with anxiety and issues around their relationship with food.”

A reader from Florence read *Mad Honey* by Jodi Picoult and Jennifer Finney Boylan: “Very dark with moments of joy. I didn't like the layout. I found the switching of timelines confusing.”

A reader from Harwich read *Gardening Can Be Murder* by Marta McDowell: “A perfect combination for gardeners who love mysteries, and mystery-readers who love gardens, this book delivers exactly what is promised on the book jacket: a delightful compendium of “How Poisonous Poppies, Sinister Shovels, and

Grim Gardens Have Inspired Mystery Writers." A nicely curated list of authors and titles will lead readers down the garden path. (Sorry! Not sorry!!)"

A reader from Worcester read *White Cat, Black Dog: Stories* by Kelly Link: "I absolutely adored this book. The narration felt very Gaiman- or Snicket-esque, interacting with the reader in a crafty way that made me incredibly invested in the stories it was telling."

A reader from Salem read *Hamnet* by Maggie O'Farrell: "So so moving!"

A reader from Franklin read *If You Would Have Told Me* by John Stamos: "John Stamos began his career as a soap opera star and progressed to dramatic actor. What was heartwarming to read was the loyal support of his parents and sisters, and the love for them which John constantly conveys in his writing."

A reader from Lowell read *Barnflower* by Carla Panciera: "I attended a reading by the author at LaLa Books in Lowell. The author is also a former co-worker of my cousin. The book is a lovely memoir of life growing up on a dairy farm in Rhode Island. Highly recommend!"

A reader from Beverly read *All about love* by bell hooks: "Enjoyable to read about how the author came to realize what love is and isn't, plus what the act of love looks like in our lives."

A reader from Sandwich read *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen: "I had read *Eligible: A Modern Retelling of Pride & Prejudice* by Curtis Sittenfeld before I read the original. I loved being able to donate the two stories. I know P& P is considered a timeless classic but I just don't love the story."

A reader from MARSTONS MILLS read *The Rabbit Hutch* by Tess Gunty: "Couldn't finish the book. Was overly explanatory in some places, & although it did show flashes of genius with character thoughts, overall it was too in depth with miscellaneous details."

A reader from Sutton read *The Mistletoe Promise* by Richard Paul Evans: "One of my favorite Hallmark movies ever that I had no idea was a book! Probably for the first time ever I would say I like the movie better because the book is so much sadder."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *A World of Curiosities* by Louise Penny: "This book was amazing with its subplots and how it all came together at the end. The painting depicted in the book is a real painting. I think it's the authors best work yet."

A reader from Hopkinton read *Our Missing Hearts* by Celeste Ng: "Well written, but scary. This takes place in the not too distant future, and seems very plausible."

A reader from Weymouth read *All the Light we can not see* by Anthony Doerr: "I enjoy reading historical fiction, especially regarding Nazi Germany/ WWII, and this story captured a slice of that era."

A reader from Sandwich read *Invisible Hour* by Alice Hoffman: "Evocative and compelling storyline. Brought back memories of *The Scarlett Letter* and communes."

A reader from Hopkinton read *Our Country Friends* by Gary Shteyngart: "Not my favorite - a story set in the early days of COVID. Characters were difficult to like and I struggled to finish it..."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *House Rules* by Jodi Picoult: "Fantastic view of parenting a child with autism."

A reader from Weymouth read *The Maid* by Nita Prose: "Delightful whodunnit! I was rooting for Molly as she navigated her way through this mess, feeling so alone and confused. Her spirit shines as her friends rally around her."

A reader from Reading read *We All Want Impossible Things* by Catherine Newman: "I appreciated the authentic look into hospice care and end of life from the perspective of a caregiver. The characters were fallible and believable."

A reader from SCITUATE read *The Change* by Kirsten Miller: "Three older women with 'special' powers randomly meet and solve multiple murders. The twisted ending is great but doesn't quite balance the rather unnecessary emphasis on female monthly life cycles. I probably wouldn't recommend this book but would be willing to read others by this author."

A reader from READING read *Murder Your Employer* by Rupert Holmes: "Such a fun witty book! Great humor and such a creative way to weave three stories together!"

A reader from Belchertown read *The Ride of Her Life* by Elizabeth Letts: "This is the true and incredible story of a woman, Annie Wilkins, accompanied with her dog as she rode her horse across America in the 1950s, fulfilling her dying wish to see the Pacific Ocean. Quirky, a spell binder of a book and there is some heartbreak but, still, a marvelous read."

A reader from Hopkinton read *Flipping Boxcars* by Cedric the Entertainer: "I was skeptical about this book, but it turned out to be good. It was historical fiction based on the author's grandfather."

A reader from West Falmouth read *Quiet* by Susan Cain: "It's interesting and an eye-opener - helping me understand why I feel and behave as I do- really important for introverts and highly sensitive people, but also could be helpful for extroverts."

A reader from BEVERLY read *Junior Miles and the Junkman* by Kevin Carey: "A poignant story of a young man mourning his father's passing and learning those you love are never truly gone. Great characters, conflicting events interwoven into a great read."

A reader from Essex read *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* by Gabrielle Zevin: "Very interesting characters but I am not a gamer and some of the gaming talk was way beyond my comprehension."

A reader from Scituate read *The only good Indians* by Stephen Graham Jones: "Surprise modern horror Native American story. Complex and engaging with an ending that leaves you uncomfortable!"

A reader from Belchertown read *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks: "A well researched, beautifully written story centering around a prize racehorse in the 1800's and the young slave who helped raise him. Slavery, the Civil War, and modern day racism mixed in with an interesting look at research in the Smithsonian museums."

A reader from Stoneham read *Somebody like Santa* by Janet Dailey: "Christmas romance with some suspense added made this book a quick but fun read. Small Texas town has its share of interesting folks that help a father and his troubled son to bond and learn from their neighbors and find love."

A reader from Hatfield read *Babel* by R. F. Kuang: "A bit dark for my tastes, but well written."

A reader from Sandwich read *Eileen* by Otessa Moshfegh: "A thoroughly strange book, but Moshfegh writes captivating prose."

A reader from Swampscott read *Magical Mushrooms, Mischievous Molds* by George Hudler: "I am fascinated by mushrooms and molds so this book caught my interest right away! I learned so much and the text was easily readable."

A reader from Stoneham read *Iron Flame* by Rebecca Yarros: "This was a great sequel to Fourth Wing. I hope Yarros continues to build on this series."

A reader from Greenfield read *Hester* by Laurie R. King: "Excellent fictional rendering of Hester Prynne."

A reader from Reading read *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus: "It's hard not to like Liz, a scientist/cooking show host who takes no crap despite so much of the social order working against her. The ending is too good to be true, but with everything she went through why not give her and us something to cheer about? A very funny book."

A reader from Beaverton read *The Decameron Project* by New York Times Magazine: "This is a collection of stories originally solicited by the New York Times to appear in their magazine section. They were overwhelmed by the volume and quality of the submissions they received. Most short story anthologies are somewhat uneven, with some good, some great, and some forgettable pieces. The majority of these stories were good or great with no bad stories in the mix. Highly recommended for lovers of short fiction. Perfect for the holiday season when we're all so distracted."

A reader from Niantic read *The Wren, The Wren* by Anne Enright: "Liked how wove poems in the book that were written by one of the characters who presented one way to his family and another to the world. Which probably many do."

A reader from Buckland read *How to Stop Time* by Matt Haig: "It was an intriguing look at the ramifications of near eternal life. The author has skillfully made smooth transitions between different time periods as the main character travels through them."

A reader from Hampden read *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus: "Loved the book. Good easy read and liked the characters very much."

A reader from Worcester read *Make It So* by Patrick Stewart: "Wonderful audiobook which I borrowed from the library but did not finish. I plan to take the book out again. Sir Patrick Stewart is the narrator and he is wonderful!!!!!"

A reader from Montague read *Soil: the Story of a Black Mother's Garden* by Camille Dungy: "Enjoyed learning about gardening/nature from the perspective of a woman of color. She is a poet and writes like one."

A reader from Melrose read *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver: "This was a heavy read, but also very eye opening. I certainly think definitely about the term "redneck" after reading this book. Definitely worth the read."

A reader from Palmer read *Happiness Falls* by Angie Kim: ""We didn't call the police right away," Mia tells us from the get-go. On that fateful day when her father went missing, her brother Eugene came running

back from the park where he was hiking with her father, shoving Mia down on his way to the house. Then, she thought, her father returned as well, but by the time she figures out the mistake, he's been missing for hours.”

A reader from Hudson read *People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks: “I appreciated the concept of the book but the execution left me struggling to connect with characters anew for each flashback period. If I'd come into this expecting a connected compilation of short stories, it may have resonated more.”

A reader from Lakewood read *Someone Else's Shoes* by Jojo Moyes: “This was a fun read about a woman who is thrown out by her rich husband and finds friends and revenge with women who live a much less lavish life style.”

A reader from Attleboro read *All adults here* by Emma Straub: “It was a great story written about a family with many issues to overcome and how they come together.”

A reader from Cambridge read *Apeirogon* by Colum McCann: “Two men, one Palestinian and one Israeli—their stories, their friendship. Beautifully written.”

A reader from Tewksbury read *Flight* by Lynn Steger Strong: “The story spoke loudly about the family struggles and dynamics - especially during the holidays.”

A reader from Northfield read *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus: “There is no local bookstore that I am aware of so a woman at my church suggested this book to me. I was skeptical at first as it sounded like a romance book (and I do not like romance books) I absolutely enjoyed reading this book. And to find out after that they made a miniseries about it. I will be watching that to see how they did.”

A reader from Woods Hole read *Lethal Tides* by Catherine Moseley: “Fabulous look into the complexities of winning WWII. Interesting local fact and I knew Mary Sears when I was young.”

A reader from Fall River read *A Guest in the House* by Emily Carroll: “A graphic novel ghost story! Sure to leave you questioning what you just read!?”

A reader from Wrentham read *In Other Words* by Jhumpa Lahiri: “Insightful examination of language acquisition, belonging and otherness.”

A reader from Beverly read *One Last Thing Before I Go* by Jonathan Tropper: “My first time reading Tropper. I quite enjoyed his writing style and storytelling abilities.”

A reader from South Hadley read *Heaven & Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride: “Thoroughly enjoyed this book - the story moves along. The characters touch so many aspects of the human existence. But the message of what is really important will stay with me.”

A reader from Salem read *Another Kind of Madness: A Journey Through the Stigma and Hope of Mental Illness* by Stephen P. Hinshaw: “My reading interests are vast, so recommending a book that I will enjoy is likely a very easy feat. Psychology, mental illness and memoirs are all high on my list of topics I enjoy reading about. This was one of the most heartfelt, moving memoirs I have read in some time. The book details a young man's life as he navigates a difficult family situation, mainly his father's struggle with mental illness and the stigma that affected the family. This book was a beautiful journey.”

A reader from Conway read *Woman of Light* by Kali Fajardo-Anstine: "An interesting book illustrating the treatment through many generations of mixed race (Mexican, Indian, European) peoples in the Colorado area. Took me a while to get into the story but then found myself thoroughly enjoying it and really liking the characters. A little bit of fantasy involved but that related to the cultures involved. I want to know what happens to the next generation."

A reader from Amherst read *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* by Suzanne Collins: "truly remarkable. book seller asked if I was seeing any movies this month, and based pick based on the fact I was seeing the movie. I had read the book originally in 2020 and the re-read was better than I remember."

A reader from Reading read *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle: "I had read this book about 50 years ago and now read it again. Its a wonderful book with the famous Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson."

A reader from Worcester read *The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* by Robert Dugoni: "I liked this book. It is a coming of age story about a young boy born with a condition, ocular albinism, red eyes and how he struggles with the bullying he indures. A light read but enjoyable one."

A reader from S. Weymouth read *The Midcoast* by Adam White: "The Midcoast was an interesting read. I didn't feel a connection with the narrator, but it kept me hooked."

A reader from Hampden read *Go Set A Watchman* by Harper Lee: "I loved it and it made me think differently about To Kill A Mocking Bird."

A reader from Seekonk read *Everyone Here is Lying* by Shari Lapena: "This was my first time reading this author. I really enjoyed the book, couldn't put it down. You find out what happened to the missing girl about 2/3rds through the book, but it continued to keep my interest. The ending, however, I felt was too abrupt."

A reader from Merrimac read *Love Marriage* by Monica Ali: "Twenty-six-year-old Yasmin Ghorami is training to be a doctor in London and planning a wedding that should be a fun and exciting time in her life, except when cultures clash, family members interfere, infidelities ensue and long held secrets are revealed."

A reader from North Weymouth read *The Ride of Her Life* by Elizabeth Letts: "It is a wonderful story, beautifully written, a "must read" for readers of all ages. It was recommended to me by the Friends of the Weymouth Libraries bookstore, and is one of my all-time favorite books."

A reader from Beverly read *A Vintage Christmas* by various authors--all public domain: "I really enjoyed this collection of Christmas stories and poems. It had an old-fashioned feel, with authors like Alcott, L. M. Montgomery, Charles Dickens and the like, and made a nice cozy read for the holiday season."

A reader from Melrose read *Lessons In Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus: "I thought this book gave a voice to all the women who were not accepted based on their talent and strengths. It demonstrated how women have coped over the years to take care of themselves and their family. I identified with the feelings of Elizabeth. It was amazing to me how quickly her thoughts brought back memories of my struggle to be recognized as an individual rather than my husband's wife. I have recommended this book to all my friends and can't wait to have a book discussion with them."

A reader from Methuen read *Yellowface* by R.F. Kuang: "A snappy send-up of the publishing industry."

A reader from Sandwich read *The Violin Conspiracy* by Brendan Slocumb: "A mystery, but also a love story; pure love for making music and listening to music, and being a part of music. Slocumb writes with a depth of feeling and imagery that the reader connects with, even if the reader doesn't play an instrument."

A reader from Somerville read *Shark Heart: A Love Story* by Emily Habeck: "A story about a couple in which one of them is slowly turning into a great white shark. It sounds bonkers, but it's just how things are in the world of this book; the story is really about how the characters are dealing with this inevitable end to their very new marriage. Unique and refreshing!"

A reader from Weston read *the puppets of spelhorst* by kate dicamillo: "this book was about how this group of puppets got sold to this guy that was a uncle to these to girls. he gave the girls the dolls and then the girls performed a puppet show and the whole family watch it. they loved and so did the puppets. at the end they went away and went to a new place."

A reader from Attleboro read *Liar* by Fern Michaels: "Light reading Enjoyable. Cullen, a furniture restorer, buys an armoire and brings his sister, Luna in to help him find its origin."

A reader from Enfield read *I'd Rather be reading: A library of art for book lovers* by Guinevere de la Mare: "I was in a bit of a reading slump and this definitely helped with it. It's such a great inspiration for the love of reading."

A reader from Turners Falls read *The Feeling of Falling in Love* by Mason Deaver: "An interesting and entertaining read. A new reading genre for me, enjoyable."

A reader from Braintree read *Yumi and the Nightmare Painter* by Brandon Sanderson: "This book follows two protagonists mysteriously linked one day in two different worlds, melding fantasy and sci fi together with a tale of romance."

A reader from Wilmington read *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: No Brainer* by Jeff Kinney: "I like how it's very new and how there are so many twists."

A reader from Methuen read *We are Grateful: Otsaliheliga* by Traci Sorell: "A beautifully illustrated picture book that introduces children and adults to the traditions Cherokee people use to express gratitude throughout the year and across the seasons ... not just at the fall harvest."

A reader from Middleboro read *The stranger upstairs* by Lisa matlin: "This is a thriller that really feels like you're watching a scary movie with a haunted house. I enjoyed the read and felt the suspense until the end."

A reader from Wilmington read *Sharp Objects* by Gillian Flynn: "Very freaky and probably not something I would have read otherwise, but I had a hard time putting it down and enjoyed it overall."

A reader from Falmouth read *Ordinary Grace* by William Kent Krueger: "This is not a book I would ordinarily choose, but the author pulled me almost immediately. The story was compelling and well written."

A reader from Scituate read *Bookclubbed to Death* by V.M Burns: "Recommended to me as I enjoy mysteries and this book had added appeal as the main character owns a bookstore. However I don't think I will read any of the prior books in this series as I did not find myself dying to pick up the book as I usually do when I really enjoy a book."

A reader from HAMPDEN read *Harlem Shuffle* by Colson Whitehead: "I enjoyed this genre defying novel because of:

1. Whitehead's spot-on depiction of New York City, especially Harlem, in the early 1960's.
2. His characters, especially Ray Carney-the lead, whose behavior is provocative and puzzling.
- 3.The interspersing of humor with mystery in a series of stories that hold your attention all the way through the book."

A reader from Dennis Port read *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid: "This was one of those books where I picked it up to read a quick few pages to get a feel and suddenly it was two hours later and multiple chapters deep."

A reader from Springfield read *Hansel & Gretel* by Neil Gaiman & Lorenzo Mattotti: "This retelling of Hansel and Gretel paired with the almost haunting images is a nice quick read. This doesn't deviate much from the Brother's Grimm tale but does have a nice history of the tale at the end."

A reader from north dighton read *Abolition Geography* by Ruth Wilson Gilmore: "This collection of essays causes readers to contemplate the geographical implications surrounding the construction of prisons in the US."

A reader from Seekonk read *A Key into the Language of America* by Roger Williams: "It's a great primary source for life among the Narragansett Indians of Rhode Island as experienced by Roger Williams in 1643. It is set up as a dictionary with the English translations to Narragansett words. There are observations throughout detailing the lives of the native people based on categories groups of words."

A reader from West Yarmouth read *Flight* by Lynn Steger Strong: "Quick read and premise and underlying message it conveyed was good. However, I did not like the way the author changed to a different character so often as it did get a bit confusing to keep track of all of them."

A reader from Beverly read *Stories from the Tenants Downstairs* by Sidik Fofana: "I've never read anything like it."

A reader from Swansea read *TOM LAKE* by ANN PATCHETT: "Tom Lake is an endearing story of a family who get to be together during the pandemic, work in their commercial cherry orchard, and share the story of Mom's short career as an actress. ...it explores what it means to be happy even when the world is falling apart.""

A reader from Lynnfield read *Emily Wilde's Encyclopaedia of Faeries* by Heather Fawcett: "This book is so cozy and fun. I loved Emily as a narrator and was rooting for her all the way. I highly recommend reading this one in the winter when there's snow on the ground!"

A reader from Reading read *The Humans* by Matt Haig: "This book made me laugh out loud quite a few times. I think my husband got tired of me reading passages out loud to him."

A reader from Amherst read *The Hive and the Honey* by Paul Yoon: "I didn't like this book of short stories that much. Although well-written, I wasn't sure of the point of them."

A reader from Three Rivers read *Wisdom of the Wild: Life Lessons from Nature* by Sheri Mabry: "It has some interesting points that are brought out from nature. It has many nice affirmations and places to make you think about your own life."

A reader from YARMOUTH PORT read *Our missing hearts* by Celeste Ng: "A very appropriate tale for the present time where we seem to have such cultural upheaval."

A reader from Hamilton read *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes* by Caitlin Doughty: "Pretty interesting. I appreciated her take on death and the currently funeral business."

A reader from Plymouth read *The Wishing Game* by Meg Shaffer: "This might be my favorite book I've read all year. I couldn't put it down."

A reader from Auburn read *The Signature of All Things* by Elizabeth Gilbert: "I loved this unique, sweeping novel of ambition, love, sexual repression and the quest for knowledge. It was imaginative, funny and heartbreaking dealing with poverty, brilliant ambition and families withholding affection and validation."

A reader from Hanover read *The Mistletoe Murder and other stories* by P.D.James: "This is a set of four short stories by P. D. James. Fascinating writing, kept me glued to the book. I am looking forward to reading many of her other works of fiction. Splendid!"

A reader from Holden read *Gardening Can Be Murder* by Marta McDowell: "I chose this book based on a recommendation by the Worcester-based Tidepool Bookshop. It's a fun look at how gardens, plants, and their associated implements, have played starring and supporting roles in a number of mystery novels."

A reader from Melrose read *This Other Eden* by Paul Harding: "This novel is inspired by the forced resettlement of a mixed-race population of a small island community in Maine at the start of the 20th century. I will recommend it to my book group."

A reader from Newton read *Fourth Wing* by Rebecca Yarros: "I haven't read a fantasy book in a LONG time (like, since Hunger Games came out), but I really enjoyed the fast paced action packed storyline! Can't wait to read the sequel."

A reader from Weston read *The one in only ruby* by Katherine Applegate: "This book was a fantastic follow up to the first books I loved this book like all the others books. It had a great ending."

A reader from Reading read *Tread of Angels* by Rebecca Roanhorse: "Dark fantasy novella by indigenous writer. Read for my local bookstore sci fi book club. Enjoyed it, ending was unexpected."

A reader from Craryville read *The Year of the Horses* by Courtney Maum: "This is an honest and inspirational memoir of a woman's struggle out of depression through returning to her childhood passion of horseback riding. The similarities in our stories is astonishing, right down to growing up in the same town!"

A reader from Lowell read *The Beatryce Prophecy* by Kate DiCamillo: "I loved this book. The supporting characters are just as compelling as the heroine, especially the goat, Answelica. I found myself laughing out loud many times. This is a very enjoyable read and I highly recommend it."

A reader from Melrose read *Heart wings and fire* by Trisha wooldridge: "Interesting use of amnesia. I felt like I was on the journey along with the main character as she remembered her past."

A reader from West Simsbury read *Never Whistle ar Night* by Ed: Shane Hawk and Theodore C Van Alst Jr.: "The subtitle is "An Indigenous Dark Fiction Anthology" and it presents some dark and chilling stories, representing many different beliefs, superstitions, and imaginings. What an eye opening view into the legacies of horror from other cultures."

A reader from Fitchburg read *Artie and the Wolf Moon* by Olivia Stephens: "A different type of read, as it was a graphic novel. I enjoyed it and the way the family stayed together."

A reader from Westminster read *Grace In The Wilderness* by Aranka Siegel: "From its opening pages where a character succumbs to eating a potato after months of malnutrition, Grace In The Wilderness is a moving story based on the author, Aranka Siegel's journey back from the Holocaust after being liberated. A very moving story."

A reader from Quincy read *Hello Beautiful* by Ann Napolitano: "Had I not seen this novel on display at Paperback Junction in Easton, I never would have read it; I'm so glad I did! It was a captivating story about the complex nature of family- how do individual desires fit into a family's belief system? This is one of my favorite novels I've read."

A reader from South Easton read *The Celebrants* by Steven Rowley: "A celebration of friendship and the families we build for ourselves. At turns hilarious and heartbreaking."

A reader from Hudson read *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby van Pelt: "This novel is about an octopus and the people involved with him at his aquarium. It's a delightful story, and something I never would have picked up if the librarian in Southborough hadn't recommend it. I absolutely recommend it to anyone who wants an upbeat, unconventional read."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *The Anthropocene Reviewed* by John Green: "Not my usual fare (I'm more of a fantasy and romance person usually) but extremely engaging. Reading it feels like listening to a friend or a favorite teacher. It helps that I like his videos and podcasts already, but I'd recommend to anyone wanting to contemplate the world around them."

A reader from Hingham read *Bone Black* by bell hooks: "Loved it! This is the kind of book you buy and read again and again."

A reader from Salem read *Uprooted* by Naomi Novik: "This high fantasy novel pulls you in completely to a world of magic and monsters, of curses and cures. It spins a spiderweb tale of passion and self discovery as young Agnieszka learns she is a witch and becomes apprentice to the land's most powerful wizard, the Dragon, growing and changing all the while as she explores her powers and the good and harm they can do to the people and places she loves, all while she struggles desperately to save them."

A reader from Haverhill read *If It Bleeds* by Stephen King: "Great collection of short stories!"

A reader from Stoneham read *ALL THAT IS MINE I CARRY WITH ME* by WILLIAM LANDAY: "One of my favorite books of 2023! I have read other books of this author and enjoyed them very much. I look forward to his next book."

A reader from Sutton read *Old Babes in the Wood* by Margaret Atwood: "Atwood is such an accomplished storyteller and this latest offering does not disappoint. I've always appreciated her willingness to tackle tough issues and to pique this reader's interest and make me think."

A reader from Paxton read *If you would have told me* by John Stamos: "I love celebrity memoirs and this was very good; funny, sad, and sweet. I really enjoyed all the Disney references within and the other celebrity encounters."

A reader from Auburn read *Speeches that changed the world* by Various: "Everyone from Muhammad Ali to Boris Yeltsin check in with speeches that run from one sentence (Julius Ceasar) to interminably long (and indecipherable) Demosthenes. From grains of sand to pearls of wisdom. Beautifully crafted volume with exceptional paper makes this edition gift-worthy."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* by Anne Tyler: "Karen H. lists this as one of her picks on Andover Bookstore's website. Anne Tyler is one of my favorites, but I'd never read this one. Thank you, Karen!"

A reader from Northfield read *The Readers of Broken Wheel Recommended* by Katarina Bivald: "One of my favorite reads on this list!!"

A reader from Fitchburg read *The Woman In Me* by Britney Spears: "This is a very current read. Confession: I read it in nearly one sitting so I guess it held my attention!"

A reader from Northampton read *A Bullet in the Ballet* by Caryl Brahms and S. J. Simon: "A delightfully funny mystery full of eccentric and dramatic characters. "Inspective Detector" Adam Quill tries to figure out who has killed the Petroushka in Vladimir Stroganoff's production, but his lack of ballet understanding is one of many obstacles."

A reader from Melrose read *The Golden Spoon* by Jessa Maxwell: "This is a mystery based on The Great British Baking Show, a television show I love. I chose it for that reason, but I found the plot silly and the writing weak."

A reader from Northfield read *The Secret Book of Flora Lea* by Patti Callahan Henry: "In the same way human action can take the world to hellish places, human action can also elevate lives to the most joyous of them. This book draws on both; leaning on our relationship with the heavy lifting of truth, the yearning for transport to sweetness through imagination, tilting towards the banks of hope, loyalty, love and kin-keeping. This book's testimony to steadfastness met the moment for me."

A reader from Beverly read *The Photographer* by Mary Dixie Carter: "Overall, this psychological thriller kept me cringing right from the start (in a way it was supposed to!). The writing and character development were adequate. Quick, easy read."

A reader from Dracut read *Flight* by Lynn Steger Strong: "The story of distant sibling relationship brought together to celebrate Christmas without the matriarch of the family. The storyline was enjoyable, but the author took a long time bringing it together."

A reader from Plymouth read *Oh My Gods: A Modern Retelling of Greek Myths* by Philip Freeman: "This is such a relatable dive into all the myths. I have been reading Greek and Roman myths since I was a kid and they have never been this compelling."

A reader from Agawam read *The Last Devil to Die* by Richard Osman: "I enjoyed this book a lot more than the previous two books in the series. It had a lot of emotion outside of the main plot, and I was actually able to follow along with everything that was happening."

A reader from Middleboro read *The Bookshop by the Bay* by Pamela Kelley: "I got an autographed copy of this book at a cute little bookstore the day before my wedding! It was a really enjoyable summery read with relatable characters."

A reader from Belchertown read *Birnham Wood* by Eleanor Catton: "This book became a real page turner in the second half. When I finished the book I immediately handed it to my husband for him to read."

A reader from Amherst read *The Inheritors: An intimate portrait of a brave and bewildered nation* by Eve Fairbanks: "This book was recommended to my husband by one of our local booksellers, so we both read it. I found it hard to get into, but then through it was fascinating."

A reader from Amherst read *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt: "This was a sweet, light read, though not as amazing as it had been described. Not one I would necessarily recommend myself, but I can see why other people enjoyed it!"

A reader from Melrose read *The Fraud* by Zadie Smith: "Remarkable characterizations and a story of the 19th century that resonates today."

A reader from Wakefield read *Vera Wong's Unsolicited Advice for Murderers* by Jesse Q. Sutanto: "I'd never heard of this book or author so I was glad the local bookstore staff recommended it. It was a fun mystery with interesting characters."

A reader from Barnstable read *The Trackers* by Charles Frazier: "I always enjoy Charles Frazier novels and this was no different. Wonderful story telling within the story telling which adds depth to the character development."

A reader from Chester read *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed: "This book was interesting. It gave information on a hike I heard little about."

A reader from Baldwinville read *The Last White Man* by Mohsin Hamid: "An interesting allegory regarding race that ultimately didn't feel nuanced enough."

A reader from Woods Hole read *Fox and I* by Catherine Raven: "A very interesting take on friendship and narration of life events."

A reader from Dracut read *The Tea Dragon Society* by Kay O'Neill: "Really beautiful cozy graphic novel."

A reader from Florence read *The Art Forger* by B.A. Shapiro: "I was hoping for more. An interesting fictional take on the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum heist."

A reader from Sandwich read *This is so awkward* by Cara Natterson and Vanessa Kroll Bennett: "Great book."

A reader from Wrentham read *The Dead Romantics* by Ashley Poston: "It was a fun read that was recommended by someone who works at my local bookstore. Ghosts and family drama and romance."

A reader from Hanover read *Galatea* by Madeline Miller: "Love Madeline Miller. But didn't like this one as much as *Circe* and *The Song of Achilles*. This is not bad but just different."

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Golden Girl* by Elin Hilderbrand: "Fun family story."

A reader from Beverly read *Tell Me How To Be* by Neel Patel: "One of the best books I've read this year. Beautiful writing that organically tackled racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, and more. The sense of longing was palpable throughout the book and brought me to tears. Also excellent on audio. Thank you Jessie from Copperdog for recommending this!"

A reader from Fitchburg read *Black Cake* by Charmaine Wilkerson: "Black Cake is an enthralling text that tells a difficult family story through multiple perspectives using a family recipe as a thread to connect it all."

A reader from Yorba Linda read *Once Upon a Sunset* by Tif Marcelo: "Light hearted = romance, long lost relatives, self discovery, second chances, family. Enjoyable!"

A reader from Longmeadow read *The Comfort of Crows* by Margaret Renkl: "Anyone who has ever put up a bird feeder in their backyard will adore this book. Through 52 beautifully-written chapters and accompanying illustrations, the author tells the story of a year in the life of the plants and animals that inhabit her backyard. Even though the author's backyard is in Tennessee, this is also the story of the wonder of the natural world in backyards everywhere. Magnificent, meaningful, and timely - I can't wait to read it again!"

A reader from Somerville read *Menewood* by Nicola Griffith: "Menewood continues and surpasses *Hild*, the first book in the series, with thoughtful meditations on power, the lionization of a 7th century Teen Idol, and moving forward after grief. It was excellent."

A reader from Amesbury read *Sink* by Joseph Earl Thomas: "Intense."

A reader from Boston read *The Big House* by George Howe Colt: "The author takes the reader on a lovely tribute to his old family home on Cape Cod, where he has spent 42 summers. The old house has seen lots of celebrities including weddings, anniversaries, divorces, love affairs and mental health issues with his family. I really enjoyed this!"

A reader from South Hamilton read *Beyond the Darkness* by Clarissa Moll: "A helpful guide for the journey with grief for anyone who has lost a loved one or simply wants to walk alongside a friend who has."

A reader from Burlington read *I Didn't Do It* by Jaime Lynn Hendricks: "This book had some stellar scary moments (an elevator scene, a hand under the hotel bed...), and good pacing. I figured out what was going on, removing a lot of the suspense, but still enjoyed the story idea."

A reader from Longmeadow read *Once Upon a Broken Heart* by Stephanie Garber: "This was my first Romantasy book and it was harder for me to get into than I expected. I prefer more of the realistic romance stories."

A reader from Saugus read *Tom Lake* by Ann Patchett: "I loved the story telling in this book."

A reader from Andover read *Wandering Through Life* by Donna Leon: "Interesting, thought-provoking, and full of details that sound more like a novel than reality, Leon writes her memoir much as she writes her Brunetti mysteries. Fun to read and well-written!"

A reader from Braintree read *Ink Blood Sister Scribe* by Emma Torzs: "A Good Morning America Book Club pick, Ink Blood Sister Scribe has dark family secrets going back generations, and plucky young people who need to uncover the truth in order to finally figure themselves and their own lives out -- all with a bookish fantasy twist that makes for an engaging story of sisters and friendship."

A reader from Wenham read *Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?* by Roz Chast: "This book was mostly amusing and relatable. The last third of the book filled me in on what to expect for end of life care of the elderly. I'm very grateful for the candid and graphic novel approach; I might not have tried this subject otherwise. Also, the librarians expanded this month's book to be also recommended by librarians. If I learned anything; end of life is expensive and I should slow the spending!"

A reader from Atkinson read *Before the Ever After* by Jacqueline Woodson: "Wonderful novel in verse about a boy whose father ends up with brain injuries after years of playing in the NFL."

A reader from Woburn read *The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray: "The Personal Librarian was a recommended book from Beacon Hill Books. While it had some enjoyable moments and the history it was based on is interesting, the writing often frustrated me. Often times I felt it was hitting you over the head with the obvious rather than using nuanced literary elements to paint the picture."

A reader from Franklin read *Tom Lake* by Ann Patchett: "This book was satisfying. Not her best, but definitely in the top 3 or 4, after Dutch House, Bel Canto and State of Wonder."

A reader from Danvers read *Hench* by Natalie Zina Walschots: "Loved it! Super cute and quick/fun to read - nothing something I normally would have picked. I picked this book by going through my favorite local store's staff picks on their website. Shout out to Copper Dog Books in Beverly, MA!"