

Most Read Books in January

A Book About or Set in Winter

69 | *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon

49 | *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy

34 | *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey

33 | *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden

31 | *The Hunting Party*
by Lucy Foley



A reader from Haverhill read *12 Dates of Christmas* by Jenny Bayliss: This story is about a woman who is in love with her male friend. He treats her poorly because he is in love with her also (eye roll). She goes on 12 dates before Christmas as part of a "dating service" offered locally. Cute and Quick Read - very predictable which is one of the reasons I read it. Didn't like many of the dudes she "dated" and her mother is an ass. 3.75 stars

A reader from Lowell read *30 Days of Night* by Steve Niles: With some exceptions, it seems the contemporary portrayal of vampires have lost their bite when it comes to being scary. This title serves as a demonstration as to how horrifying vampires can be, especially in these long dark winter days.

A reader from Chelmsford read *6:40 to Montreal* by Eva Jurczyk: Locked room mysteries are among the hardest to pull off. I found this novel of a train stopped in a blizzard interesting

until the solution. The explanations for the various mysteries were based on coincidence and far too many red herrings and loose ends tied up in unconvincing ways.

A reader from Blandford read *6:40 to Montreal* by Eva Jurczyk: A great murder mystery on a train. The train is stopped because of a massive winter storm, on its journey from Toronto to Montreal at a spot with no cell service and the train is on backup power so there's no internet either. The MC is trapped in the train car with 6 other people and the hours pass in unimaginable ways.

A reader from Florence read *6:40 to Montreal* by Eva Jurczyk: Who-done-it? An author on a train. A venomous spider. A blizzard. This was a little raunchy in parts that really wasn't necessary and a little too drawn out.

A reader from watertown read *a castle in the clouds* by kerstin gier: the audiobook was well read and an entertaining listen while putting together a puzzle. I don't usually like YA but this one was sweet, and predictable in a comforting way, and I'm not sorry to have read it.

A reader from Gardner read *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens: A warm classic that always makes me feel hopeful about the future. I like to reread it every year since it is kind of short. Thanks for the challenge that got me to dig out my copy.

A reader from Milford read *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens: A quick winter classic!

A reader from Vineyard Haven read *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens: I had been meaning to read this for a long time and this seemed like a good opportunity. I didn't expect it to be so funny!

A reader from Gardner read *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens: I've watched the story in movies and on stage, I've read abridged versions or 5th grade age-appropriate versions but never the original, until now.

A reader from Princeton read *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens: This is a classic for a reason!

A reader from Rockland read *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens: A great classic.

A reader from Weymouth read *A Christmas Memory* by Truman Capote: Capote was such a beautiful writer. I thoroughly enjoyed the stories in this semi-autobiographical book.

A reader from Woburn read *A Cold Day for Murder* by Dana Stabenow: This was a quick read to kick off the 2026 challenge! Didn't love it, but didn't hate it either. A good choice for someone who is interested in life in Alaska.

A reader from Woburn read *A Cold Day For Murder* by Dana Stabenow: Alaska in the winter. Dark environment; dark plot; dark characters. I read it during our blizzard and it was very depressing. There seemed to be a lot of "backstory" with every character, but since it was the first in the series, I felt confused a lot of the time.

A reader from Holyoke read *A Court of Silver Flames* by Sarah J. Maas: This book is set in mostly winter in the fictional winter court. It is about redemption, the power of friendship, and feminine empowerment.

A reader from Lenox read *A Court of Thorns and Roses* by Sara Maas: My first fantasy book. The book starts in a setting that is in perpetual winter.

A reader from Marblehead read *A Fatal Grace* by Louise Penny: I enjoy this whole Inspector Gamache series. Although the books do involve murders, the collection of characters make them into cozy mysteries.

A reader from Melrose read *A Fellowship of Games and Fables* by J Penner: Cute, cosy fantasy!

A reader from Westminster read *A Fellowship of Games and Fables* by J. Penner: Super fun and cozy winter read. #3 in the series.

A reader from north reading read *A Ferry Merry Christmas* by Debbie Macomber: Loved reading about all the sites I've visited in Seattle. Nice story with a happy ending.

A reader from Walpole read *A Game Of Thrones* by George RR Martin: I finally read this start to finish!

A reader from Swampscott read *A Game of Thrones* by George RR Martin: I enjoyed taking the time to read this book, especially with the new prequel show.

A reader from North Chelmsford read *A Game of Thrones* by George RR Martin: This is a very well known series, but I am not a big visual violence person so I have never seen the show. I found this book, and the next in the series at a library sale for \$2 a few years ago and decided to try them out, but never got around to reading them, so this challenge was a perfect excuse to start! This first book sets up a world taking place in Medieval times where the heads of the different kingdoms in the land fight over who has proper rights to the "iron throne". There are so many different dynamics, where one moment characters from the different houses seem to get along and the next they are sworn enemies. There is also a fair deal of adultery, incest, and infidelity creating children that the kingdoms seem to think are the next heirs to the throne, but of course they are not, which causes more fighting and accusations of treason. In this world, the main seasons are summer and winter, which each last an indeterminate amount of time. This book takes place at the end of about a 10 year

long summer where the climate is starting to change into winter - and it is said that an extended summer means a long, dark, and grueling winter is on the way. There are some parts of the world that still have the warm of summer, and some that seem to be in a perpetual winter. Overall, this series has me intrigued, but the violence that I can manage to skim over in the book is not something that I really want to watch on the screen, so for now I'll probably hold off. The cast of the show is really good though so maybe some day I'll try to watch.

A reader from Boston read *A Game of Thrones* by George RR Martin: good!

A reader from Bellingham read *A Girl in Winter* by Philip Larkin: A young woman, Katherine, meets with an old friend before he heads off to serve in WWII.

A reader from Ludlow read *A Heart For Christmas* by Sophie Jomain: Sooo I was supposed to read a chapter a day in December as an advent calendar but I got into a reading slump and failed and made it a January read. I think the concept was so fun and hope to do it again next year. It was a young adult book so it was an easy read and a cheesy romantic book. I think there was some things I wasn't expecting but mainly towards the end. I thought there was some parts that made me keep wanting to read more and to get out of my slump I liked how easy it was to follow along with the characters and story line.

A reader from Auburn read *A Killing Cold* by Kate Alice Marshall: I enjoyed the setting and how fast-paced this read was!

A reader from Lakeville read *A Killing Cold* by Kate Alice Marshall: This was the first book that I've read by this author and it won't be my last! There were unexpected twists and turns with great characters.

A reader from Franklin read *A Killing Cold* by Kate Alice Marshall: This book is perfect for a snowy weekend spent by the fire. A suspenseful mystery thriller that takes place up on a snowy mountain estate with a family that will do anything to keep its secrets.

A reader from Wilmington read *A Killing Cold* by Kate Alice Marshall: Pretty good little mystery. Somewhat easy to figure out as the story unfolds but still fun to read.

A reader from Middleboro read *A Killing Cold* by Kate Alice Marshall: This was my first thriller in a long time, I had expected more of a one by one killer vibes where the killer murders one person at a time. But this one was more about family secrets, I did suspect the wrong person as the one sending the female main character the mysterious texts. Overall I thought it was a decent read to start the year off with.

A reader from Ayer read *A Kingdom of Flesh and Fire* by Jennifer L Armentrout: Set in the winter!

A reader from Arlington read *A Long Winter* by Colm Tóibín: Miquel returns to his home to live with his family on their farm in the Catalan Pyrenees. His younger brother is getting ready to leave for his turn of military service. Miquel notices his mother acting strange and erratic which is not something she usually did before he left for his service. One day, after an argument, his mom walked off into the mountains in an effort to go to the village she grew up in. Within a few hours, a terrible snow storm hit. Lovely book. Although it was short, it was extremely moving.

A reader from Seekonk read *a long winter* by Tobin Colm: A small family set in the mountains undergoes separation.

A reader from Springfield read *A Long Winter* by Colm Tóibín: As bleak as the title suggests. A sobering tale of family and grief. Perfect for the season.

A reader from Attleboro read *A Long Winter* by Colm Toibin: Highly recommend this novella set in the remote Catalan area of Spain. It is a story of loss, love, family, fears, acceptance. Powerfully written.

A reader from Brighton read *A Long Winter* by Colm Tóibín: This novella is stark, sad, and beautiful. It explores themes of isolation, the relationship between mothers and sons, and sexuality. Despite it being so short in length, its impact will be long-lasting.

A reader from Boston read *A Long Winter* by Colm Toibin: It was so sad, but starkly beautiful. I never associated Spain with winter but this book painted such a lovely and tragic picture. The winter setting was both beautiful and ominous at the same time.

A reader from Ayer read *A Mannequin for Christmas* by Timothy Janovsky: Pretty solid romance with a touch of fantasy.

A reader from Brooklyn read *A Mannequin for Christmas* by Timothy Janovsky: Very charming and silly - a perfect distraction!

A reader from Brookline read *A Meal in Winter* by Hubert Mingarelli: A beautiful heart breaking novella that follows three German soldiers over one day in World War II.

A reader from Malden read *A Merry Little Lie* by Sarah Morgan: This was a fun multi-POV romcom. Like a book version of *Love Actually*!

A reader from Plymouth read *A Merry Little Lie* by Sarah Morgan: A fun Christmas romcom set in snowy northern England where twin sisters need to learn to trust each other again.

A reader from West Barnstable read *A Pawn for a Queen* by Fiona Buckley: Ursula Blanchard tries to save her cousin from committing treason - but ends up having to solve his murder.

A reader from Billerica read *A Polar Affair* by Lloyd Spencer Davis: A book outlining the life of George Murray Levick, the first penguin biologist who was on Scott's Terra Nova expedition to Antarctica in 1911, and his scientific discoveries about the mating habits of Adelie penguins.

A reader from Carver read *A Quiet Life* by Ethan Joella: Loved the characters and the different storylines and how the characters' lives intersected.

A reader from Pepperell read *A Quiet Life* by Ethan Joella: A story of a man facing the first winter after losing his wife and dealing with how to live the rest of his life after her death.

A reader from Wareham read *A Sand County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold: This book has reflections on humans and nature through the different seasons.

A reader from Plainville read *A Season for Second Chances* by Jenny Bayliss: It was refreshing to read a romance book that has a main character in her 40s, I appreciated that change-up. Otherwise it was a sweet book about a woman starting over and looking for herself and for real love.

A reader from Fitchburg read *A Simple Plan* by Scott Smith: Set in winter in Ohio, a good read that makes you question what would you do in the situation the characters were placed in.

A reader from Buzzards Bay read *A Train In Winter* by Moorehead: This book was chosen by my friend who is doing this challenge with me. I knew from the summary that it was going to be very my comfort zone. I am not a history or geography fan at all- but I wanted to challenge myself. And it was a challenge! Am glad that this month's book is checked off. Hoping the February challenge- even though it is out of our usual genre, will be easier and more enjoyable!

A reader from Wakefield read *A Wedding in December* by Anita Shreve: The book takes place in western MA over a weekend in December 2001, but there are lots of flashbacks to the past when the main characters were all in high school together in Maine. The snowy December setting made this book a good choice for the January 2026 theme.

A reader from Rochester read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: What a perfect snuggle by the fire on a snowy day read!!

A reader from Wakefield read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: Used to read her a lot and was happy to once again read Binchy. Beautiful story to read on a cold New Year's Day. Story of a lonely woman turning an old house into an Inn and those who stay there for its grand opening. Great characters.

A reader from Lunenburg read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: This novel was a heartwarming way to start off the new year. Binchy was so talented at creating characters who overcome obstacles and hardships, while also painting a picture of the Irish countryside in a way that makes the reader feel like they could pop over to Ireland and feel peacefully at home.

A reader from Reading read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: This book is like having a warm cup of tea on a winter's afternoon. Ten strangers meet the first week of December for the opening of an old stone guest house on the wild and beautiful west coast of Ireland, each seeking respite from personal disappointments. With the warmth of the setting and the home's hostess/owner, they click as a group. Individually, each comes to terms with unfinished business and hurt in their past and sees a path forward in life. Maeve Binchy crafts realistic characters and has you cheering for their future. A nice book to start the 2026 Reading Challenge.

A reader from Ayer read *A Week In Winter* by Maeve Binchy: I love how Ms. Binchy weaves her characters' lives into a cohesive tapestry. I thoroughly enjoyed this story.

A reader from Salisbury read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: This was a cozy book with really nice character development. I enjoyed seeing how all of the characters grew and changed during their time staying at Stone House. In some ways the book was like a lot of short stories tied together.

A reader from Lynn read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: It's been years since I've read a Maeve Binchy book, but I remember fondly the Irish towns and cities that were the stage for her stories, the characters that populated these stories and made you want to be part of it. This book was no exception, and I enjoyed reading it. The beginning of the book, where we meet the main character, Chicky, and get the set up for the story, was my favorite part. Then we are introduced to varied characters, who at first I thought I wouldn't care about, but who become interesting even through one chapter. If I had a criticism, I'd say that there are a lot of these people and I wanted to see more of their story. The book ends rather abruptly and I wanted more chapters to flesh out a few of the stories that seemed a little unfinished. Winter in this Irish town of Stoneybridge, was nothing like the bitter snowy winters in the Boston area. The landscapes in this western part of Ireland, as well as the music, culture and food, have deepened a desire to go on a walking vacation to this part of the world, perhaps in spring or Fall when it's not too crowded, and to stay in a place like Stone House!

A reader from Springfield read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: This is Maeve Binchy's final book (2013) and now one of my favorites! A new inn by the sea opens in Dublin and brings together an assorted group of guests!

A reader from Lakeville read *A Week In Winter* by Maeve Binchy: wonderful read/

A reader from Sunderland read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: Classic Maeve Binchy - great characters, scenery, heart.

A reader from Mashpee read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: This was a quick fun read.

A reader from LAKEVILLE read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: The late Maeve Binchy was one of my favorite authors. This book was her last completed work, but was published after her death in 2012. After following a dapper American from her home in Ireland to New York City, Chicky is left behind and works hard for many years to save money which she uses to purchase a large stone house on the Irish shore, near the place where she grew up. With the help of a loyal staff of family and friends, she renovates it to become an inn serving visitors who want a respite from their lives, a time to hike, birdwatch and relax. *A Week in Winter* describes the week's visit of the first guests - people from all walks of life who find rest, enjoyment, healing and love in their time there. In typical Maeve Binchy fashion, the characters and their relationships are fully developed and you leave the book feeling as if you've spent a week with new friends on the Irish coast.

A reader from Pepperell read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: The story of a woman who started a B&B type business and the stories of the people who stayed there the first week and how they found themselves in that week.

A reader from Raynham read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: This story is centered around Chicky Starr and the first week of her newly opened Inn located on the west coast of Ireland. There are many different characters, some who are involved in running the Inn and others who are guests. I enjoyed the background stories of all the characters, how they came to either work or vacation at the Inn; some hold secrets, others are trying to escape & also how their lives change after their week together! This was an entertaining, heartwarming and enjoyable book!

A reader from Springfield read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: Such a good read! Not something I would typically pick up but it sounded the most interesting of the books recommended. Did not disappoint! Cozy is the word I would use to describe it. The author's ability to make you feel as if you know all of the different characters in the span on their vignettes is really impressive. She captured the messiness and beauty of being human so well and I loved the themes of new beginnings and second chances. If only a place like Stone House really existed!

A reader from Groton read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: I loved this Maeve Binchy book! Haven't read one of her books for quite a while. The characters were varied and engaging. Makes me want to visit the setting of the book.

A reader from Belchertown read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [Listening to the audiobook with an Irish accent helped.](#)

A reader from Keene read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [It was a nice surprise that some characters that I first met in other books of Maeve Binchy popped up in A Week in Winter.](#)

A reader from Palmer read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [Almost everybody lives happily ever after.](#)

A reader from MASHPEE read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [This is a warm read, which is typical for Maeve Binchy. It was perfect for a snowy day in Massachusetts today.](#)

A reader from Gloucester read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [Excellent book. This book was a pleasant surprise. It takes place in western Ireland. She described it so well I could close my eyes and see it. Each chapter was about a different character in the book. You felt like you knew them. And how a week in winter brought about change in their lives. This book was not my usual genre. I am looking forward to expanding my horizons this year.](#)

A reader from Salem read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [As it has already been colder and snowier than usual this winter, I wasn't enthusiastic about starting the year with a "winter" book. Brrrr! But I consulted the suggested list and thought a book set in Ireland would be interesting. This turned out to be the perfect book for me, as it wasn't entirely about winter, and the winter in Ireland is not as cold and snowy as it is in New England. Binchy is a short story writer, and this book was structured as a series of stories about the various characters in the book. The stories combined to paint a picture of events leading up to the week in winter and the events of that week, when everyone was together, and how this little group grew and changed from that experience.](#)

A reader from Chatham read *A week in winter* by Maeve Binchy: [It had a calming vibe even when discussing characters going through difficult things. Well written. Almost anthology of characters that come together eventually.](#)

A reader from Halifax read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [In uncertain, stressful times I always find myself turning to a cozy read by Maeve Binchy. To me, her books feel like a hug from an old friend, and A Week in Winter was everything I needed to read this January. The setting, characters and warmth were engaging and hopeful.](#)

A reader from Wakefield read *A Week In Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [A Week in Winter is set in the fictional Irish coastal town of Stoneybridge where a new guest house, Stone House, opens its doors for the first time. The story follows a diverse cast of characters—including the owner Chicky Starr, her helpers, and the first week's guests—as their lives, secrets, and](#)

dreams intertwine over the course of a single week, exploring themes of love, loss, and community.

A reader from Woburn read *a week in winter* by maeve binchy: [Very sweet and nostalgic about Ireland.](#)

A reader from PLYMOUTH read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [I wasn't sure I would enjoy the format of the book, each chapter being a different character, however the way the story of each character weaved together was so interesting.](#)

A reader from Marshfield read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchey: [Just what I needed to read right now. Wonderful characters and good dialog. A feel good plot.](#)

A reader from Centerville read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [A positive light read, a number of vingettes tied together. I enjoyed this.](#)

A reader from West Boylston read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [Fun group of stories following the lives of the guests visiting an Irish hotel during a week in winter. Interesting character development. Read it in 2 days.](#)

A reader from Northampton read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [Cozy winter read, nice to finish up while blizzarding outside.](#)

A reader from Somerville read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [This was a fun book to read during a snow storm.](#)

A reader from Oxford read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [I've read many books from this author and usually love them, but this one left me disappointed. As usual, Maeve Binchy has many different characters, all intertwined, and each with their own storyline. I always enjoy her characters and their stories, which I did with this book. The ending left me underwhelmed and disappointed. It seemed to end abruptly without anything tied up. I really wish I knew more about what happened to certain characters, as I was very invested.](#)

A reader from Natick read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: [This is a cozy winter read with a dramatic setting on the cliffs of western Ireland with an appealing strong lead character in Chicky. As is true for many of us, Chicky's strength and wisdom are earned and then she shares both with her guests and her employees. I empathized with many of the diverse cast of characters and learned from others. This is my first read by Binchy, and I love how she helped the reader understand an array of individuals' motivations, strengths, and failings. Each chapter added another character to the mix and I could begin to place myself as one of their group. I discovered I was cheering for each of them as Chicky subtly gave each what they needed. Though many reviewers adore this last book of her body of work as one of their favs, I'll read another Binchy! Thank you, Maeve, for finding me now.](#)

A reader from Lee read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: What a wonderful book full of interesting and diverse characters and their stories. I chose the audio version and loved it.

A reader from Mashpee read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: A wonderful gathering of characters.

A reader from Billerica read *A Week In Winter* by Maeve Binchy: I enjoyed reading this book. I appreciated Binchy's descriptive language and how she brings the Irish countryside to life for her readers. I also enjoyed the way that she told story of Stone House through the guests, devoting a chapter to each guest(s), after starting with the origin stories of Chicky and other characters who were part of the Inn. The final chapter "The Landscape of A Week In Winter" featured black and white photos of the landscape paired with quotes from the novel. It was a nice touch!

A reader from Methuen read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: A wonderful book full of fascinating characters, one with a more interesting story than the last. I couldn't put this book down.

A reader from Swampscott read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: It's interesting how Binchy made connections among a whole group of characters who end up vacationing at the same hotel at the same time. Binchy creates interesting vignettes about all of the very unique characters who are brought together. I was expecting a little more of a connection, or some surprise that would all be tied up in the end. So, while I wasn't 100% satisfied, it was still a lovely way to pass the time on a snowed-in day.

A reader from Manchester read *A Week In Winter* by Barth Landor: It was an interesting story told over a week.....

A reader from Lexington read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: A warm, gentle novel set against a beautifully atmospheric Irish winter, following ordinary people whose lives intersect in quietly moving ways.

A reader from Melrose read *A Week In Winter* by Maeve Binchy: This book was so interesting! It was set in one of my favorite countries, Ireland. Restoring an old mansion on the Atlantic Ocean into a destination resort, Stone House, is one of my fantasies. Going to a place like this for a holiday is also a dream of mine. The characters are so well developed. Chicky Starr is a strong women who does not hear the words "It can't be done" when she decides to do something. Chicky is the common thread that runs through each story. Each one of the characters is developed like a short story within the larger plot. The reasons they all ended up at Stone House are as different as each group. As in life when we have a common experience with strangers, we develop a bond that often becomes a pleasant memory. This story inspired me to plan a trip and create a warm memory for myself.

A reader from Heath read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: I like her as an author and think this was one of the strongest of her novels.

A reader from East Taunton read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: A wonderfully warm boom filled with beautiful characters and stories!

A reader from Woods Hole read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: Always the best from Maeve Binchy's works!

A reader from Lowell read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: I had never read a book by Maeve Binchy. I very much enjoyed this one. The characters were so distinct and interesting. This book is about finding yourself and not being afraid to take a chance to do something that others would never expect you to do.

A reader from Mansfield read *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: This book made we want to go to the West of Ireland. Maeve Binchy introduces you to several interesting characters who all end up at a hotel that I wish existed. While the characters are varied and compelling, the hotel was the main character for me. Imagine a classic old mansion , roaring fires, wonderful home cooked meals shared around a rustic wooden table with other , "like minded" travelers. Scenery, nature and kindness made this an enjoyable, relxing read.

A reader from Bellingham read *A Winter Away* by Elizabeth Fair: This book reads like a Georgette Heyer novel although it is set sometime after WWII (but pre 60s). Not much happens in terms of action, just a lot of meals and chores and talk of the scenery - until the declaration of love/proposal in the last chapter, which was a little surprising because it didn't really seem like the characters liked each other particularly for most of the book. Not that it was badly written, not at all. It's just that this type of book is not for me.

A reader from Matamoras read *A Winter Haunting* by Dan Simmons: A little over the top for me but loved the winter atmosphere and old house.

A reader from Burlington read *A Winter in New York* by Josie Silver: While many romance novels are based on goofy miscommunications, this one was not cute. The main character acted in some pretty unexplainable ways with very little consequence. And while this takes place in the winter, the season or vibe was not very essential to the plot. It was, however, very readable and made me want to eat vanilla gelato!

A reader from Malden read *A Winter in New York* by Josie Silver: A London chef moves to New York to start over and finds a gelato place that uses the same recipe that her mother used. There's romance and family secrets.

A reader from Rowley read *A Winter In New York* by Josie Silver: This is a book with a great idea that doesn't quite deliver. Iris, raised by a loving single mother escapes to New York fleeing an abusive relationship following the death of her beloved mother. She takes with her the secret Gelato recipe her mother made for her and swore her to never share. But during her time in New York she uncovers the truth of the origin of the Gelato recipe and finds herself through uncovering the past and falling in love. The book had good moments but the book plot was based around secrets and miscommunication which was very frustrating.

A reader from Northampton read *A Winter in New York* by Josie Silver: I was surprised when the time setting of this book didn't start in winter, but rather September (with the exception of the prologue), given the title of this book. This book is about two different people who have experienced a loss of a loved one a few years ago -- their path crosses for the second time and they form a collaborative friendship in order to save the male protagonist's family gelato business. I really needed a palate cleanser after reading a really challenging dystopian book, and this was the exact book I needed. A whimsical story that made me wonder how these two were going to end up, while also being nervous about how the potential conflicts and family secrets were going to unfold. Never thought I would read a story about a gelateria in the middle of winter, but this was delightful!

A reader from Marshfield read *A Winter's Promise* by Christelle Dabos: It took a while for me to get truly interested in the story, but once I did, I was hooked. The plot has lots of twists, the characters have many sides, and the post-apocalyptic world is very unique.

A reader from Abington read *A Wish for Winter* by Viola Shipman: Having grown up in Michigan, I really enjoyed all the references to Michigan settings and culture. However, I found this book to be overly sappy and repetitive which made it more difficult to read than I had hoped.

A reader from Montague read *About Grace* by Anthony Doerr: Doerr's debut novel, *About Grace*, is a wild adventure from Alaska to Ohio to the Caribbean and then back to Alaska. David, the main character "sees" future disasters and is trying to keep his infant daughter, Grace, from drowning in a flood by moving to the Caribbean and staying out of her life. He is, however, torn between wanting to be in Grace's life and feeling like he must stay away or his premonitions about her death will come true. After 25 years of living in the tropics, he journeys back to Ohio and Alaska searching for Grace (who has survived the flood and lives with her son near her mother's first husband). David's travels take him to a primitive camp in the Yukon where he almost freezes to death. Winter is brutal - survival depends on keeping the woodstove burning and the generator from freezing. He gets interested in photographing snowflakes and sees the beauty in the frigid cold. Doerr's descriptions are

beautifully written and David's ability to connect with the other researcher keeps them both alive. The extreme contrast between his time in the Caribbean and then in Alaska makes for an incredible story.

A reader from Montague read *about grace* by Anthony Doerr: This book is largely set in Alaska, with a time in the Caribbean also. The protagonist is a hydrologist with a fascination with the molecular mechanics of water, and particularly of snow flakes. He is "cursed" with dreams that are premonitions of accidental deaths. One such dream forces him to abandon his wife and young daughter out of fear that he might cause the latter's death. After many years, not even knowing if his daughter is alive, he is finally able to reconnect with them and eventually reestablish a good relationship with her and his grandson. The descriptions of the winter in the Yukon, doing scientific research were particularly amazing.

A reader from West Warwick read *Accidentally Yours* by Christina Lauren: Suchhh a cute rom com, part of Amazon's Improbable Meet-Cute: Second Chances collection.

A reader from Quincy read *Alice Rue Evades the Truth* by Emily Zipps: Just before Hanukkah, Alice Rue has to perform CPR on an employee, Nolan, in the office building where she works as a night receptionist. The EMTs assume she is his girlfriend, and tells his family so when they arrive at the hospital. Nolan is now in a coma and his family is comforted to know he had someone who loved him there when he had the stroke. Alice, charmed by this lovely family and without anyone to spend the holidays with, goes along with the miscommunication. Alice spends all winter getting closer with Nolan's family, especially his sister Van, but as more time goes on, Alice knows telling the truth will only become harder.

A reader from Boston read *All the White Spaces* by Ally Wilkes: Polar horror novel, had very similar vibes as *The Thing*. Liked the decision to have it in the Antarctic during winter so there was no "day" for the characters.

A reader from Cumberland read *Almost, Maine* by John Cariani: A really interesting read as a book adapted from the author's own play. The multiple love stories in the novel have an interesting tone and way of writing I thought was refreshing to read in fiction.

A reader from Freetown read *Amish Christmas Twins* by Shelley Shepard Gray: These are 3 stories set in Amish life all revolving around twins. Enjoyed all 3 especially the one about the kids in foster care. You really felt for them as they wondered if these new foster parents would be as cruel as the last ones.

A reader from Woburn read *An Amish Christmas* by Cynthia Keller: This book is about an English family who crosses paths with an Amish family and how all of their lives are

changed. I enjoyed learning about this particular Amish community. I know they're all different. I encourage anyone who enjoys Amish novels to read this one.

A reader from Quincy read *An Elephant in the Garden* by Michael Morpurgo: I thought this book would be sad. I was right. But it was good too.

A reader from Malden read *An Imortals Pain* by Auburn Tempest: This is the seventh in the urban druid chronicles, the series has grown well and is a lot of fun this book was no exception!

A reader from Hanover read *An Unwanted Guest* by Shari LaPena: Stuck in a blizzard in the Catskills at an inn with no way to reach the outside world a murder of one of the occupants disrupts what was suppose to be a restful time. Panic happens when a second person is murdered.

A reader from Bellingham read *An unwanted guest* by Shari lapena: Kept my attention till the end - a good whodunnit style murder mystery.

A reader from New Bedford read *Angelica and the Bear Prince* by Trung Le Nguyen: I like the art work and storytelling the author did.

A reader from Feeding Hills read *Angus, Thongs, and Full Frontal Snogging* by Louise Rennison: I 'spun the wheel' to get a suggestion for a genre I dont usually read and this Young Adult classified book was on the list of recommended reads. It was a hoot!! The book is in the form of a journal written by an early-high-school aged girl and records her angst/insecurity/daydreams etc. It was a really fun read that I would have never discovered outside of the reading challenge!

A reader from Boston read *Animal Life* by Audur Ava Ólafsdóttir: In the middle of Icelandic winter, Dýja, a midwife coming from a long line of midwives, has delivered her 1,922nd baby. Dýja has learned everything she knows about midwifery from her grandaunt, and has even inherited and lives in her grandaunt's old apartment. In the apartment, Dýja finds letters and manuscripts her grandaunt left behind after she passed. As a storm rages on towards Reykjavik, Dýja reads through her grandaunt's writings finding her reflections on human nature and on what it means to be alive.

A reader from Nashua read *Any Trope But You* by Victoria Lavine: I loved it! This book takes place in the Alaskan winter so it was a perfect fit for the challenge! I think my favorite scene is when the main character, Margot, conquers her first mountain climb in the book! It's out of her element but she's so proud of herself. The love interest, Forrest, is proud of her too, and he tells as much. It was such a sweet and cozy winter read.

A reader from Lawrence read *aunt dimity and the heart of gold* by Nancy Atherton: Set in Finch England during the month of December. This is part of a series. Aunt Dimity is a ghost who corresponds to Lori via a blue journal

A reader from Woburn read *Awakened* by A.E. Osworth: Grabbed from the library on a whim! Magic vs AI! Super cool plot.

A reader from AYER read *Ax's & o's* by Kayla Grosse: I always enjoy a book where the characters are 'trapped' in a cabin, in this case it's due to a major snowstorm around Christmas. The couple who live in the cabin rescue a man from the road after getting stuck out in the snow storm, and intense feelings and acts ensue. I enjoyed the consent aspect of this book and how well thought out the plot was, especially since the main part of the book takes place over a few days in the cabin.

A reader from Whitman read *Beartown* by Frederik Backman: Really good book. Topic is a little tough at times (especially if you have kids) but such a good read.

A reader from Lee read *Beartown* by Frederik Backman: I thought I would love this book because I loved *The Man Called Ove*, but this book was so tragic and sad.

A reader from Hanover read *Beartown* by Fredrick Backman: Learning about a small town obsessed with football seeing all the politics that follow. Interesting read.

A reader from Lee read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: I thought the book was different. I didn't like that all these people got away with things, and that it was so tragic.

A reader from Arlington read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: This is the 5th book I've read by Backman. While not my favorite (that would be *A Man Called Ove*), I continue to be impressed with his character development and his ability to weave those characters into a story. And I've already started *Us Against You*, the next book in the trilogy.

A reader from Grafton read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: Makes you feel what the darkness of a small town in the winter feels like. Very heavy.

A reader from Braintree read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: Wow, I did not enjoy this book. While I appreciate the author was trying a different narrative style, I found his method of employing 20+ narrators within the small hockey town ineffective and surface-level. His attempts to weave in a gay character did not work for me. The dialogue throughout the novel was laughable. Overall this book was a disappointment, especially after loving *A Man Called Ove*.

A reader from Tewksbury read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: It's so early on and yet this could be my favorite read of the year. I loved this!

A reader from Dennisport read *Beartown* by Fredrick Backman: Enjoyed the novel very much. The characters were realistic and heartfelt. It showed deep feelings that people have for others and the way it influences their lives. Roots run deep in a small town. I truly felt for the characters as they developed in the novel, I wanted to get to the page throughout the book. Good read.

A reader from South Hamilton read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: This book is about a town and their dedication to hockey, even at the expense of one of their non-hockey playing children. It is about relationships, expectations, and what to do when you don't meet the expectations put upon you by everyone else. And what to do when you unexpectedly exceed all those expectations.

A reader from New Salem read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: Very hard to follow at first but gets better as you go along.

A reader from Springfield read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: Backman is a master story teller. He made me care about his well-developed characters from a remote forest town in Sweden. He made me care about the hockey that takes place there. I love his other novels: *A Man Called Ove*, *Britt Marie Was Here*, *Anxious People*, and *My Grandmother Told Me To Tell You She's Sorry*. I was, at first, hesitant to pick this one up because hockey, which I know next to nothing about, is it's centerpiece. But I trusted Backman's writing, and this novel, once again, secured that trust.

A reader from Woburn read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: A very good read that covers difficult issues. The storylines were well thought out and it was one of those reads that I couldn't put down.

A reader from Brookline read *Beartown* by Fredrik Bachman: Another great book by Fredrik Bachman. I love his writing style. I don't love sports books but his writing and the way he explores the depths of relationships is stunning.

A reader from Woburn read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: I would give this book 2.5 stars out of five stars. I thought it was too long and there were too many characters for any of them to be fully realized.

A reader from Brookfield read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: I had heard this book was good but it seemed to be about hockey, which didn't interest me too much. Turns out, it's really good, and about people, not just hockey (and the hockey parts turned out to be pretty interesting after all). Some parts of this book are hard to read, both characters' behavior and language, but Backman writes in a way that makes people feel real, and that you're living in this small town with them.

A reader from Cambridge read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: The book was first all about hockey, but quickly changes to the city. At first I thought it was going to be a lot like Friday Night Lights, the importance of the sport to the city. But midway it can become a lot more about the responsibility of these young people (some not hockey players) to the city. I was really surprised how one of the major hockey players really had a sense of family and was an actual good guy. Benjamin became my favorite character and one of the few I was cheering for a happy ending for. The adults were not fully developed enough for me except for the older coach. They seemed to be just plotlines for the young people and the city. I liked the ending but felt that I would have liked to know a little bit more about the future of these young people. They made a reference to the fact that one of them would be dead in 10 years. Who becomes a star hockey player? Do not show us a crack of the future with no context. Is Kevin still a terrible person or does the incident with Maya change him for the better. Is he able to have a good relationship with a woman. The book left me with too many questions and not enough answers.

A reader from Lee read *Beartown* by Fredrik Bachman: *Beartown* is another fabulous Fredrik Bachman story. It is a story about the people in a small town whose lives revolve around hockey. Bachman presents us with amazing character development as a tragic event tests the friendships, morals, and decisions of every person in the town. I stayed up way too late to finish this book! So good!

A reader from Somerset read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: Despite a slow start, I really liked how the author built up the characters and *Beartown*. The repeated phrases, often first used to describe hockey, and then aspects of the town or lives of the characters, were effective at building up the hockey culture in town. It really impressed upon me the importance of hockey in the town, especially the semi-final game, and how the hockey culture permeates the town. The second half of the book was more focused on the aftermath of the traumatic event, and I thought it was written in a very realistic way. It was very frustrating to read and made me very angry, yet, I don't think it could have been written in any other way. I think it had to be written that way for the purpose of the story, and if it ended any other way, it would not have had the impact it did. I also liked how the author would present something with the certainty it would happen a particular way, but then go in a different direction, like with Zacharias and the introduction. I wouldn't have picked up this book if not for the challenge, but I'm glad it did, especially because I think it told a very important story and handled a difficult subject matter very well.

A reader from Weymouth read *Beartown* by Fredrik Bachman: *Beartown* takes place in a Swedish town. This struggling town has pinned its hopes and aspirations on a junior hockey

team and its star player, Kevin. However, a crime occurs that leaves the town divided over justice for the victim or allegiance to the hockey team.

A reader from Heath read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: For anyone who was ever 15 years old, or a parent, or a coach, or from a small town, or who loves forests, and also anyone who knows the human race is both beloved and flawed.

A reader from Georgetown read *Beartown* by Frederik Backman: As in all of Backman's books, I was quickly immersed in the characters' lives and environment, their situations and choices made. With a small, wintry forest town where hockey is life as the backdrop, you could feel both the push and pull of isolation versus community. Highly recommended.

A reader from Dedham read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: I never thought I would like a book about hockey. However, the way the author writes about emotions and life makes it easy to connect with the characters. I really enjoyed this book and would recommend. Trigger warnings are necessary.

A reader from Boston read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: As someone who grew up in a small town with a heavy focus on high school sports, *Beartown* perfectly encapsulates the spirit, politics, toxicity, and cliquy atmosphere. The multinarative is easy to follow and gives depth to each character, leading to a fleshed out understand of *Beartown* and all the people in it. This story was a difficult read that was impossible to put down. The ending isn't happy, but it's real.

A reader from Whitman read *Beartown* by Fredrik Backman: This book is really good and I loved how the characters developed and how it made me so angry sometimes at the accuracy.

A reader from Cambridge read *Before they are hanged* by Joe Abercrombie: A fantasy book with multiple character perspectives that all set off during the winter. Two perspectives take place in snow and cold, depicting a very miserable winter, while the third perspective enjoys a winter in a far warmer climate and can't believe how warm winter can be. Regardless no one is having a good time, they are all just trying to survive.

A reader from Amherst read *Before we say goodbye: a novel* by Toshikazu Kawaguchi: The fourth book in the author's international bestselling *Before the Coffee Gets Cold* series. The series explores themes of love, loss and second chances, with a focus on perspective over changing the present.

A reader from MAYNARD read *Below Zero* by Ali Hazelwood: Rival scientists in the Arctic fall in love in this STEMnist novella.

A reader from Lenox read *Best wishes from the full moon coffee shop* by Mai mochizuki: A gem of book with magical, astrological cats helping humans find their truest wishes. There is a strong theme of the love of pets in this sequel. Takes place at Christmas and is filled with festive, winter scenes.

A reader from Wakefield read *Best Wishes From The Full Moon Coffee Shop* by Mai Mochizuki: This book was cute and cozy, about a traveling coffee shop staffed by cats who can turn into people. It's near Christmas and they appear to people who need help figuring out their heart's true desire because they are feeling lost or stuck in life in some way.

A reader from Leicester read *Black Sun* by Rebecca Roanhorse: If you loved the *Fallen Gods* series by Hannah Kaner, you'll love this!

A reader from Norfolk read *Black Woods Blue Sky* by Eowyn Ivey: Intriguing story set in Alaska. Bridie is a single mother and Arthur is an odd duck. After getting to know each other, they move in together but after a period of time, all is not as it seems. The author has great character development, pace and prose. The book moves along and keeps you guessing.

A reader from Longmeadow read *Blade* by Wendy Walker: I read this through Amazon Prime reads, so I got it early. I really wanted this book to be really good—it had a good premise and was complicated in what seemed like a good way. But the layering of time periods got overwhelming. I wanted much more of the present day story.

A reader from Northampton read *Blankets* by Craig Thompson: A perfect winter read about the intensity of first love and the culture of Midwest Christianity with the brutal, snowy Midwest winter in the background. I grew up only an hour away from where Craig Thompson is from. This book had been on my to read list for years and I finally sat down to read it. The drawing style, with its intricate patterns and details, was enthralling. The way Thompson presented the relationships between himself and the people in his life was realistic and relatable. He also perfectly captured the irrational fears of the midwest folk; art school producing homosexuality and the teenage mind. What stuck with me were the feelings he describes about going back to visit where you grew up—still feeling vulnerable and scrutinized around your parents, rediscovering old belongings, fuzzy memories, and the pain of loss. Both he and his brother moved out of state. I did too. Interesting.

A reader from Northampton read *Bleak House* by Charles Dickens: Snowstorm Fern was the perfect time to finish this classic, which climaxes in a carriage-ride through snowy London. It takes a while to build momentum but it's worth the investment of time to meet memorable characters and one of the first detectives in fiction.

A reader from Swampscott read *Boy in the Striped Pajamas* by Mark Herman: Read this in honor of Holocaust Remembrance 1/28. It's a touching book about how a German boy becomes friends with a Jewish boy in Auswitz.

A reader from Vineyard Haven read *Breakfast at the Beach house* by Judith Keim: fun and light.

A reader from Winchendon read *Brian's Winter* by Gary Paulsen: This is an amazing story of resilience and bravery. Great "sequel" to *The Hatchet*.

A reader from Concord read *Brightly Shining* by Ingvild Rishoi: This is a beautiful modern retelling of *The Little Match Girl*, set in the months leading up to Christmas. It touches on poverty, addiction, and caring and community.

A reader from Wilmington read *Brimstone* by Callie Hart: This book is a sequel to the book *Quicksilver*. It takes place in the cold and snowy land of Yvelia and the main characters reside in the Winter Court. Winter is my favorite season but this unfortunately was not my favorite book! It's very long for the minimal amount of plot that exists.

A reader from Franklin read *Buffalo Hunter Hunter* by Stephen Graham Jones: The book travels through the winter and snow. It follows native Americans in the west as well as the important role the Buffalo played in their culture.

A reader from Boston read *Bury Your Dead* by Louise Penny: This (6th book with Inspector Gamache) is set in Quebec City during Winter Carnival, and Three Pines of course. The descriptions of long winter walks, after bundling into parkas and boots, to warm cafes & bistros & libraries - all in search of The Killer. Penny has an amazing way of making me feel the cold, and hear the crunch that walking on snow makes in zero degree weather. It made me feel better about the bundling up I need to do so I can walk around not-nearly-that-cold Boston.

A reader from Somerville read *Butcher's Crossing* by John Williams: Honestly, this book is set during all the seasons but a huge turning point of the plot happens when winter hits. *Butcher's Crossing* is about a Harvard student who drops out in his third year after hearing Ralph Waldo Emerson speak "Nature" to his class. He heads to *Butcher's Crossing*, Kansas to find himself and connect back to nature away from Boston, as urged by Emerson. He finds a man that wants to go on a hunting trip in the Colorado Rockies to hunt buffalo and sell their hides. I cannot say much else without spoiling but the winter portion of this book is really crucial to the development of the main character since he finally has the time to wonder if he made the right decision. Super fitting because I think winter is the best season to slow down and reflect! This was phenomenal and it was a 10/10 for me.

A reader from Lowell read *By Your Side* by Kasie West: I appreciated the reasonable depiction of someone struggling with diagnosed anxiety.

A reader from Amherst read *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis: This is a classic. I read the whole series many years ago as my regular Sabbath rest activity. I don't know if this is allowed. But I listened to the audiobook during cooking this time. It's always fun to engage in the fantasy world of the four young children and Aslan. In fact, we went outing recently to the Franklin Zoo in the snow, I took a photo of the lion in the snow and sitting on the rock (see attached photo). It was a vivid image of Aslan and the great storyline of redemption by dying on the stone.

A reader from Worcester read *Call of the Wild* by Jack London: It was such a pleasure to reread this book. I haven't visited it since high school, and it still brought tears in all the same places. It is hard to imagine that my pug and French bulldog springing from wolves!

A reader from Belchertown read *Candlelight Christmas* by Susan Wiggs: Exactly what one would expect when you mix the snowy silence of winter woods, crackling fire, two lonely hearts.

A reader from Wellesley read *Carved in Blood* by Michael Bennett: For me, the thriller part of this book took a backseat to the excellent depiction of the characters. You don't HAVE to read the other books first, but the impact probably won't be there without the background. With the investment in the characters... you're punched in the gut. Multiple times. Okay, yes, by the thriller part. It is a thriller. With excellent character development. More please.

A reader from Westport read *Charms and Chocolate Chips* by Bailey Cates: Magical Bakery Mystery.... fun story, a murder Mystery, and recipes too!

A reader from Fitchburg read *Cher the Memior Part 1*: Amazing to see (okay read) where she came from and what shaped her life.

A reader from Agawam read *Christmas at Holiday House* by Raeanne Thayne: The holiday season always goes by so quickly and there are so many cozy holiday books I want to read, I'm always still attacking my Christmas TBR pile in January. "Christmas at Holiday House" is such a fun seasonal read: snow; decor; cookies; skiing; and good cheer. Highly recommend as a winter read to continue celebrating all the good things of the season.

A reader from Methuen read *Christmas at the Nantucket Restaurant* by Pamela Kelley: This book is set during Christmas time on Nantucket. What initially drew me in was its local setting. But, within a season we don't hear a lot about on Nantucket. By that I mean, we usually read a fun, nostalgic book located on Nantucket in the summer sun and the busiest time of the year. It was nice to get this image of Nantucket in New England snow. Feeling

like a warm hug, I loved how this book felt like watching a cozy holiday Hallmark movie. It wasn't until after reading this book that I also found out that it is actually the sequel to, "The Nantucket Restaurant". So, I appreciated that I could be new to the series and just right in without feeling lost, or having to catch up to enjoy it! Highly recommend for a warm winter holiday read.

A reader from Uxbridge read *Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens: I have been watching many different movie iterations of this book for over 50 years (some good, some bad) and had never bothered to read the actual book. I am so glad I did. So much detail and so many nuances are missing in the movie versions. Of course, each movie has their own take on the book version. I found the book version to be a little bit softer in tone with, of course, much more detail. I love the way Dickens' style of writing encourages your mind to see and feel the place, the characters and the emotions like you're right there on the snowy streets of London, or in the home of Bob Cratchit. Needless to say, I bought a copy of the book to read every year!

A reader from Rockport read *Christmas Fling* by Lindsey Kelk: A fake relationship romance set at Christmas in the Scottish Highlands. This was a cute story. I liked the two main characters and would've liked to see a little more between the two on the page and I felt like the ending was slightly lacking.

A reader from Arlington read *Christmas is All Around* by Martha Waters: Two people who hate hallmark movies live a holiday hallmark movie, complete with an only one bed and a traveling troupe of carolers.

A reader from Halifax read *Christmas with the Queen* by Hazel Gaynor and Heather Webb: A nice love story intertwined with a story about Queen Elizabeth. To me, this reflected the TV series *The Crown*. I'm glad I watched that before reading this, because it brought the characters to life more.

A reader from Berkley read *Christmas with the Queen* by Hazel Gaynor, Heather Webb: Starts in 1952, with Queen Elizabeth II preparing for her first Christmas Broadcast, and spans five Christmases until 1957.

A reader from Hudson read *Christmas with the Queen* by Hazel Gaynor & Heather Webb: Set in England just after World War II, Queen Elizabeth is new to the throne and must create the iconic Christmas address. This is only a brief part of the story as it is the story of a group of friends who are trying to make it in the world and both end up working/visiting Buckingham Palace. It is a very light feel good read. The only thing I thought dragged a bit was the romance storyline. This is historical fiction.

A reader from BREWSTER read *City of Thieves* by David Benioff: Beautifully told story of the Siege of Leningrad - structured as a classic quest with characters you come to love.

A reader from Quincy read *City of Thieves* by David Benioff: My son suggested this book to me. During WW2, two arrested Russian boys are given a change of freedom if they can break through the National line and acquire a dozen eggs for a Soviet colonel's daughter's wedding cake. A quick read and well worth it!

A reader from Arlington read *City of Thieves* by David Benioff: Fast paced, interesting story. Few deeper level themes, and more vulgar descriptions of women than I'd like. Entertaining nonetheless. 3/5

A reader from Springfield read *Clementine Crane Prefers Not To* by Kristin Bair: A woman (mother, wife, library employee, going through pre-menopause) hits a wall and decides that there are many things in her life she would prefer not to take care of any more. The book is frustrating and enjoyable to read but I finished the book feeling seen and powerful.

A reader from Rockland read *Close Knit* by Jenny Colgan: While not technically a Winter book, snow makes an important appearance, making the book seasonal to my mind. Hope that's not too much of a spoiler. The knitting elements provide a warming balance.

A reader from BARRE read *Cold, Cold Bones* by Kathy Reichs: Love the Temperance Brennan series.

A reader from West Barnstable read *Cold: Adventures in the world's frozen places* by Bill Streever: Bill Streever explores many facets of cold or winter all over the planet & through history. The book is set up in chapters for each month beginning with July & ending with June. It's always winter somewhere! Streever presents topics including polar exploration, the evolution of climate science & meteorology, the impact of cold on humans, plants & animals as well as the methods used to survive the cold including hibernation & migration. He also recounts many of his own adventures in the cold.

A reader from West Barnstable read *Cold: Adventures in the world's frozen places* by Bill Streever: Bill Streever explores many facets of cold or winter all over the planet & through history. The book is set up in chapters for each month beginning with July & ending with June. It's always winter somewhere! Streever presents topics including polar exploration, the evolution of climate science & meteorology, the impact of cold on humans, plants & animals as well as the methods used to survive the cold including hibernation & migration. He also recounts many of his own adventures in the cold.

A reader from Lee read *Comfort and Joy* by Kristin Hannah: Comfort and Joy is a magical story about a woman, Joy, who decides to start her life over following a divorce. After

surviving a plane crash, she meets a young boy (and his dad) who are also starting over after the loss of his mom (wife). When I finished this story, I wanted to start it all over again to catch more of the magic after such a surprise ending!

A reader from Palmer read *Country House Christmas Murder* by Andrea Kress: This was a cute book, the third in the Berkshires Cozy Mystery series. A fun read set in Massachusetts in the prohibition era. It was fun reading about the characters stuck in a snow storm at the same time we had our big snow storm this month!

A reader from East Falmouth read *Cowboy Christmas blues* by Maisey yates: Small town romance, quick read. A little heat.

A reader from Reading read *Crazy for the Storm: A Memoir of Survival* by Norman Ollestad: The book alternates between descriptions of the author's survival in a deadly plane crash in the California mountains and his childhood among an adventurous but dysfunctional and abusive family. While I enjoyed the descriptions of transcendence while surfing and skiing, the plot structure made the narrative a bit choppy and disjointed.

A reader from CHELSEA read *Credence* by Penelope Douglas: Set in a small, isolated rural American community, *Credence* explores how belief, control, and loyalty take hold quietly over time. The story follows a young girl who, after her parents die, is sent to live with her late father's family—people she doesn't know—where an interesting dynamics begin to unfold.

A reader from Methuen read *Cruel Winter with You* by Ali Hazelwood: Jamie Malek just needs a roasting pan for Christmas dinner, but borrowing one means facing Marc, her best friend's brother and the man who once broke her heart. Trapped together by a blizzard, a crackling fire, and unresolved feelings, one winter night may change everything.

A reader from Chatham read *Dark Tide: The Great Boston Molasses Flood of 1919* by Stephen Puleo: This is a well-researched and narratively told account of Boston's Molasses Flood. Puleo does a stunning job of laying bare the socio-economic and political context of the disaster both locally and nationally and connecting those events to current industry practices. Regardless of how familiar you are with the North End of Boston, Puleo crafts a compelling recounting that I couldn't look away from.

A reader from Greenfield read *Dark Winter's Night* by Frankie Robertson: This is a Norse retelling of the Psyche and Eros myth told through the story of a human woman marrying into a family of Light Elves. It was a fun tale that explores many figures in Norse mythology and the role of trust in a marriage.

A reader from Brockton read *Dead of Winter* by Darcy Coates: A group gets snowed in/stranded while on a tour of the Rockies. One by one, people are murdered. The survivors are all skeptical of each other and are wondering if they were all lured out there to die for some reason, or if this is the work of a random serial killer.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Dead of Winter* by Darcy Coates: This winter based psych thriller had me on the edge of my seat from page 1!! A group of strangers on a vacation to a winter lodge in the snowy mountains get stranded when a tree blocks the road their bus was traveling on and a perilous snow storm overtakes them. They find a cabin hoping to wait out the storm until they start winding up murdered! More chaos ensues that will have you staying up reading all night to find out what happens! FYI - trigger warning, though not exactly a horror genre, there are some details of gruesome murder in this story, so not for the faint of heart!

A reader from Worcester read *Dead of Winter* by Darcy Coates: Could not put this horror/thriller down, especially the last 150 pages. The imagery was too much at times where it didn't make sense to me, but it sure was wintery.

A reader from Braintree read *Dead of Winter* by Keri Beevis: A somewhat predictable but good psychological thriller about a woman, Lola, who goes to meet the brother she never knew. A snowstorm leaves her stranded with him and his wife and she finds they have plenty of secrets that they are desperate to keep hidden. I listened to this audiobook and enjoyed the British narrator, finding myself holding my breath at times.

A reader from Edgartown read *Dead of Winter* by Darcy Coates: A mystery and thriller! Group going to lodge in snowy Rocky Mountains get stuck in isolated cabin. Gruesome murders happen.

A reader from North Attleboro read *Dead of Winter* by Elizabeth Corley: There was too much going on...hard to focus on main topic all the side stories became a distraction.

A reader from Plymouth read *Dead of Winter* by Darcy Coates: Chilling, fast paced, clever.

A reader from Woodstock read *Dead of Winter* by Darcy Coates: Grabbed me from the very beginning! Was very hard to put down. The snowstorm and conditions the characters experienced really contributed well to the story. Well done!

A reader from Plymouth read *Dead of Winter* by Darcy Coates: 5 stars. I guessed the twist but it still left me second guessing till the end!!

A reader from Dartmouth read *Dead of Winter* by Darcy Coates: A tour group of strangers gets stuck in a remote cabin during a blizzard. The people in the tour are getting picked off

one-by-one and have no way to escape their unknown killer. Although I figured out the plot twist very quickly, the book was still engaging.

A reader from North Billerica read *Dead of Winter* by Rebecca Zanetti: The book was a decent mystery based in the winter in Alaska.

A reader from Wilmington read *Dead of Winter* by Darcy Coates: Excellent murder mystery with a twist.

A reader from Salem read *Death Without Company* by Craig Johnson: Great mystery--when you think everything is ironed out, there's still more to learn. It also inspired me to research the Basque diaspora.

A reader from Cheshire read *Deceptive Hearts* by Marlene Chase: An okay read for January. Set in Amish Country in February.

A reader from Fitchburg read *Deep Freeze a Virgil Flowers Novel* by John Sanford: What's colder than midwinter in Minnesota? When the murder victim is found in a melted spot in the frozen Mississippi river. Virgil Flowers and his cast of off-the-wall friends try and solve what turns out to be two murders involving the High School Class of 92 reunion committee.

A reader from Malden read *Devil in Winter* by Lisa Kleypas: A fast paced romance with spice. I just love a reformed rake.

A reader from Plainville read *Disappearing Earth* by Julia Phillips: This book was both fascinating and at times challenging to follow. There are a lot of characters to keep track of, but I did like how the author links the characters over the course of the novel. In the world today where Russia is depicted as evil because of their dictator leader and what he has done in Ukraine, this book does a great job of humanizing the people of Russia, specifically women. It's important to remember that our leaders don't always reflect all the people that live in a certain country. One lingering question I have is will there be a sequel? That cliff hanger was a doozy.

A reader from Turners Falls read *Do Not Disturb* by Freida McFadden: McFadden keeps you hooked as you attempt to solve her stories. A quick and enjoyable read.

A reader from Halifax read *Do Not Disturb* by Freida McFadden: It was a good read and a deep snow storm played a large part in the plot. I liked the twists and turns, and that some characters got what they deserved.

A reader from Salem read *Doctor Zhivago* by Boris Pasternak: It is quintessentially Russian. That's really the only way to describe this novel. An epic but not. Romantic but not. Historical but not. Deeply philosophical but not. Depressing and fatalistic but not. Lyrical

but not. Lots of characters. Little dramas burning everywhere. And a string of fate guiding it all along. It was wonderful.

A reader from Salisbury read *Doctor Zhivago* by Boris Pasternak: A perfect love story. Throughout the chaotic and terrible times of the early 1900's- toppling of the Tsar, a revolution, war, government restructuring - a man never waivers regarding his love of a woman, his country, Christianity, mankind, and nature.

A reader from Boston read *Doctor Zhivago* by Boris Pasternak: *Doctor Zhivago* feels less like a historical epic and more like a very human reminder of how messy it is to live, love, and try to stay yourself when the world is falling apart. I liked that it doesn't glorify the revolution or the romance—everything is complicated, a little broken, and deeply personal. It's quiet, reflective, and sad in that slow, lingering way that sticks with you after you put it down.

A reader from Peabody read *Doctor Zhivago* by Boris Pasternak: Winter and war and political foment in Russia (including Siberia). I had trouble keeping the Russian names and nicknames straight in spite of a page at the beginning of the book listing the main characters. New identities didn't help. Characters I thought had been killed showed up again later (just wounded and recovered). People meet and separate and incredibly meet again. Dr. Zhivago was a medical doctor and also wrote poetry. He was conscripted at least once, served at least twice, his family went into exile for a time (without him), and his life was entwined with another woman, Lara, a nurse. A tale of difficult survival. (And I didn't like the rats.)

A reader from Boston read *Don't Let Him In* by Lisa Jewell: Read this for book club and realized it fit this challenge prompt!

A reader read *Dream at her* by Stephen King: An interesting twist on alien invasion stories. Not as scary as other King books but significantly more violent. I really enjoyed the bonds of friendship between the main characters and the way the book integrated flashbacks to their childhoods well. King makes good use of a snowy Maine backwoods as his setting.

A reader from Worcester County read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: Frigid winter in an isolated bit of Poland, just east of the border with the Czech Republic. A heroine who you gotta love sticks to her guns, as a series of mysterious murders unfold. Hard to describe the charm of this strange story, but it's smart and laugh-out-loud funny.

A reader from Milton read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: Janina lives in Poland; during the isolation of freezing cold winter, she is in touch with the animals - whom she considers equal in dignity to people, as well as the lawbreakers and others who take animals for granted. As an outlier from the small community, she is an

elderly/ mature woman with independent thoughts, outspoken ideas, and fierce beliefs. Dismissed by the local "powers that be" because of who she is, she is not listened to and not heard; this drives her to secretive and malicious extremes. This is a depressing story, but an important read; it is relevant for 2026 USA.

A reader from North Andover read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: Overall I enjoyed it! It didn't feel like a mystery/crime genre to me, since I was more invested in the characters/narrator than the actual sequence of events. And the narrator already had opinions so it wasn't so detective-y in nature. I liked that the narrator was an older, somewhat weird woman, which made it interesting hearing from her with these strong opinions and musings. The people she surrounded herself with were also quirky in their own ways and I found them endearing (And while I'm sure the names our main character assigns these people are more of a reflection of herself and her self-assuredness, sometimes the names came out very cute which may have endeared me to them faster. Like Oddball and Dizzy). Lastly, the scenery of the plateau she lived on was very also very cozy to me and I remember at one point putting the book down to go make a tiny quick painting inspired by it. I think the combination of these little characters and setting were what made the book for me! Side note, but this was one of the times where I felt very aware that I was reading something in translation, because the narrator and Dizzy spend their time translating William Blake to Polish. There was one point where she mentions some particular difficulty of translation, like trying to keep the playfulness of the language while also keeping the meaning intact (which is an interesting point). She then presents a few versions of translations of a poem, which are presumably in Polish, but then I am here just reading them in English again, a translation of the translation. I'm sure the translator had to then think through how to get the new nuances from these translations across, which was funny to think about.

A reader from Salem read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: This was a really well written book which pulls you into the mysterious deaths of a small Polish town through astrology, humor and intrigue. Summarizing the book will make it sound like a murder mystery but that almost takes a back seat to the life and history of the main character as she navigates her own life and strong beliefs in animal welfare.

A reader from Wakefield read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: Quirky, and I love quirky. A great book-club choice. Beautiful reflections on love, prayer, nature and beauty. Highly recommend it.

A reader from Brookline read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: i loved the voice in this, tokarczuk's commitment to strangeness and

tenderness. i loved the narrator and her little girls and all the weird characters who populate this remote Polish village. i love the way winter exists in this novel.

A reader from Whitman read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: Janina is one of three permanent residents living on the Plateau in Poland. That is until one, Big Foot, is found dead. Oddball, the third resident, find him he goes to get Janina. Since they are so close to the Czech boarder when they phone the police goes to the Czech operator instead of a Polish one. So what do you? Move the body and dress it in their Sunday best. But at least Janina's feet are clean. (You need to read the opening line.) As we get into the story we find out Janina is really into astrology and doing horoscopes on everyone. One thing she is trying to figure is if knowing when someone is born can you figure when, and maybe how, they will die. Interesting concept. Janina will have four more victims to work on their horoscopes. Now Janina also has a reason for the death of all of these men and has told the police. She even sent letters to them on her theory. They just sum it up as a crazy old lady ravings. So who did it? Did the animals rise up against these hunters? How true is Janina theory on the deaths? Can your horoscope really tell when you will die? Can the people in this town get better cell service than needing to seek higher ground? At least when she was taken by ambulance her feet were clean.

A reader from Princeton read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: I really didn't like this one. Not very much actually happens aside from the main character rambling.

A reader from Winston Salem read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: Never underestimate the fortitude of a middle-aged woman.

A reader from North Chatham read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: Super strange but in the best way! Quirky and pretty unsettling to say the least.

A reader from Brookline read *Drive Your Plow over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: I was so pleased that this book, which has been sitting on my shelf for a while, was a perfect fit for this month's theme. It's a tale of an older woman who lives high in the mountains of Poland on the Czech border, and it opens with the death of one of her neighbors. From there, it becomes a quirky mystery. As would be expected of a Nobel award winner, Tokarczuk is a marvelous writer who creates a vivid world in this small hamlet. My only nit to pick was the protagonist's obsession with astrology, which sometimes occupied paragraphs at a time and held no interest for me.

A reader from North Andover read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: As I was approaching the final pages of the novel, the first thing I wanted to do was to go back to the beginning. I got the sense while reading that there were some things

that were not being related to the audience and when revisiting the text, there are certain aspects that I would consider differently knowing how the work ends.

A reader from Reading read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: A stunner! Great writing, a very unusual plot, sort of Tree-venge for animals, with a twist at the end that I didn't see coming but made total sense. Winter in Poland is a major character, the foundation of the world views and suffering of the main characters. There is severe isolation but also some life-giving community.

A reader from Burlington read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: This was an incredibly unique book. The main character is an older woman who is constantly dismissed by the people around her, particularly men in positions of power. Hunters begin dying in the valley she lives in and she is convinced that it is the Animals who are taking revenge. This book was bleak, but also had these beautiful, darkly funny moments. Tokarczuk really nailed the satire in this novel. The depictions of the harsh winters in Poland was perfect for January and the cycles of the earth seemed to play a thematic role in the novel. Highly recommend!

A reader from Beverly read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: This was a quirky one. I wouldn't call it a thriller since the outcome is fairly obvious from the start, but it's an enjoyable read, and even funny in parts.

A reader from Bedford read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: Loved the prose and buildup of suspense.

A reader from Brookline read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: I really enjoyed this one! The main character/narrator had a very unique perspective. I think it's interesting that many libraries shelve it in the mystery section because I don't think that's the main focus of the book at all. Overall, very good! The main character is like the Lorax if he wasn't a coward & I think that's neat.

A reader from Boston read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: Translated from the Polish by Antonia Lloyd-Jones. Novel follows the eccentric adventures of the main character Janina mostly through a winter, but 12 months total in a tiny Polish town on the mountain border with the Czech Republic. The novel has a unique flavor and style and Lloyd-Jones does an exceptional job capturing that in her translation. Narrator Janina investigates a set of murders of local hunters/poachers and believes that these deaths are being carried out by animals as revenge for the victims' animal cruelty.

A reader from North Reading read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: "Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead" may be my favorite example of an unreliable narrator I've ever read. As a big fan of mystery novels, I was quite interested in

the method this book took of having the entire story be from the perspective of someone who sees the world in a way that no one else does. This protagonist so often leaves things out, adds strange perspectives to seemingly mundane things, and describes things in ways that take a few re-reads to understand. As more information gets revealed through the eyes of Janina, our protagonist, we start to see a more sinister picture of the events. But more than that, we begin to see how Janina thinks, and how her opinions and views of the world are coloring our own perception of the events of the book. Just recently, I read "The A.B.C. Murders" by Agatha Christie, where Hercule Poirot makes the point to explain that all humans act rationally, but what one person sees as rational is different from any other. A person's actions may seem irrational from our perspective, but if you could get in their head, and view the world the way they do, you would find that everything they do makes perfect sense. "Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead" somehow feels like a continuation of that point, as the more time you spend viewing the world through the eyes of Janina, the more I found myself getting swept up in her descriptions of events, and her long winded tangents on the nature of human life and our relationship with animals and nature. At times, I felt the same annoyance that Janina felt when individuals wrote her off as just "some crazy old lady", despite the fact that most people would probably react quite the same in their shoes, myself included! In that sense, I wouldn't really much describe this book as a thriller, or even a mystery. I view the mystery and the plot less as the focus, and more as a vehicle to understand our eccentric main character, and how despite her view of the world differing so greatly from others and our own, we come to understand her, despite her long winded opinions of astrology and occasional contradictions in her opinions. "Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead" is a book that takes a thriller plot, and adds a heavy dose of philosophical questioning from the perspective of a woman who will easily take you outside of your normal mindset. Highly recommended to anyone!

A reader from Palmer read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: Excellent book, highly recommended.

A reader from Braintree read *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk: Quirky murder mystery. Very quirky. A staccato delivery often feels detached but makes for a more involved reading requiring attention and commitment by the reader. Great characters drawn deep and surreal. Very dense prose and feels at times like the translation from the Polish that it is.

A reader from Westfield read *Duck the Halls* by Donna Andrews: One of the Meg Langslow mystery series, this is a fun holiday story featuring animals in unlikely places and chaotic results.

A reader from Malden read *Dungeon Crawler Carl* by Matt Dinniman: It's January 3 and the world ends. Carl is trapped outside in the freezing cold in his boxers and a pair of Crocs, trying to wrangle his cat Princess Donut. And that's when he enters the dungeon. This book was hilarious and accessible even to someone who hasn't played a video game in more than 20 years. I would highly recommend this book to anyone hoping to blow off steam by mocking toxic gamer culture, rooting for a try-hard, and narrating sarcastic ringside announcements in your head.

A reader from Northampton read *Early Riser* by Jasper Fforde: This was a fun, comedic melange of science fiction and mystery, taking place in a timeline where humans have evolved to hibernate through the earth's intense winters. Our protagonist is a timid young man in Wales who gets swept into an adventure taking him through his first non-hibernating winter as he stumbles through a mystery involving a shadowy tech company that manufactures a potentially deadly hibernation drug. There's fantastic world building here, and a great balance of humor and real pathos. I'll absolutely be looking into Fforde's other books.

A reader from Foxboro read *Eight Perfect Hours* by Lia Louis: Perfect book to curl up and read on a winter day!

A reader from Northbridge read *Eileen* by Ottessa Moshfegh: Its weird girl lit at it's finest. Eileen works as a secretary for a children's prison by day and takes care of her drunken father at night, then one day a new coworker of hers changes everything.

A reader from Woods Hole read *Eileen* by Ottessa Moshfegh: Such a good and grotesque Christmas book. Ottessa Moshfegh constructs complicated and unpleasant characters so well.

A reader from Brewster read *Eileen* by Ottessa Moshfegh: Follow this strange narrator's telling of her obsessive friendship turned mystery all set in a cold and dark New England town. It's definitely a dreary read for these dark days of January, but thrilling as well!

A reader from Salem read *Emily Wilde's Encyclopaedia of Faeries* by Heather Fawcett: A charming fantasy set on a remote island in the far north of Europe. The main character studies faeries from all over, but these faeries are particularly elusive and dangerous due to their connection to winter, the season which shapes the lives of the residents of this island. The romance in this was especially fun, in part because the author did a good job building up the friendship before the romantic parts began, and the friendship was not forgotten once the romance was introduced. Great wintery read with a truly creative magical system.

A reader from Portland read *Emily Wilde's Encyclopaedia of Faeries* by Heather Fawcett: I struggled a lot with choosing a book for this prompt. I so much survival horror and polar

exploration nonfiction that I felt like I'd read every winter book out there already and went through many, many lists before I found something else I wanted to read that fit. This book was fun and very cold!

A reader from Hull read *Emily Wilde's encyclopedia of faeries* by Heather Fawcett: This book was so good I need to read the others on the trilogy. It's about a girl who goes to the far north to research fae and some are evil and she goes to a whole fae kingdom and there is a little something for everyone. Highly recommend.

A reader from Boston read *Emily Wilde's Encyclopedia of Faeries* by Heather Fawcett: An absolutely delightful pseudo-historical, journal style novel set in Winter in a fantasy Nordic country. I adored the cozy wintry setting, I found the integration of different cultures "other" folks to be fascinating. I think the characters were very tangible and I loved hanging out with them. I will definitely be continuing the series at some point to see how these themes develop.

A reader from Enfield read *Eminence Front* by Rebecca Rowland: If this were not a horror novel, I would've read it just for the neighborhood drama and compelling, deeply flawed characters. As it stands, the depth of the horror and the Final Destination and Birdbox meets domestic thriller vibes were outstanding. It was the perfect quick horror thriller for a snowy day.

A reader from Florence read *Ending Up* by Kingsley Amis: A darkly funny story about aging, set at Christmastime.

A reader from Ayer read *Endurance* by Alfred Lansing: The perfect book for the harshest New England winter in years, because it reminds you of how much worse it could be! "Endurance" was published almost 70 years ago, but feels modern - Lansing basically sets the style for narrative nonfiction that remains the standard today, with Laura Hillenbrand, David Grann, Erik Larson, etc.

A reader from Wakefield read *Ethan frome* by Edith Wharton: What was once thought of as a bland, emotionally insignificant book a part of a high school mandatory reading list, Ethan Frome today leaped out of the page to connect to me many years later as an older mid-thirties family man. Life is fast, unpredictable, and can change in a moment even in the everyday mundane slog that is living through several New England Winters. Learn to appreciate the time you have and GRASP opportunities that come your way, before it is too late and desperate times fall to desperate decisions made.... Thank you Ethan & Edith! May we all find our Mattie's and not be compelled to attach to soon to our Zeena's.....

A reader from Ipswich read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: This is such a bleak, cold book it made me want to go sledding. I tried to brighten my mood by reading the latest John Irving

book, Queen Esther. Despite its cover it's not really a winter book (nor is it really about Queen Esther). Frankly, it's the worst John Irving book I've ever finished. Such a weak effort from an author I have really enjoyed in the past. However, it did make me appreciate Edith Wharton, all the more. At least she didn't pad *Ethan Frome* with a lot of the inane blather that seems to fill Irving's works these days.

A reader from Derry read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: I read the classic "Ethan Frome" by Edith Wharton for this month's category, "a book about or set in winter." It's not something I would normally have chosen, but I'm glad I did. Wharton's beautifully old-fashioned prose vividly captures the stark beauty and relentless cold of a late 19th-century New England winter. The season itself feels like another character in this bleak tale of loneliness, isolation, and hardship. Ethan Frome is trapped in a loveless marriage to the bitter Zeena while quietly torn by his feelings for her young cousin, Mattie, who lives with them. His deep sense of morality keeps him focused on what he believes is right even as his unhappiness grows. An "accident" is mentioned early on, casting a shadow over the story and drawing the reader towards its tragic conclusion. A haunting and memorable novel; definitely a classic worth reading.

A reader from Blacksburg read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: This book certainly clearly conveyed the bleak New England winter. I didn't know much about this book before I read it and was a bit surprised where it ended up.

A reader from Rochester read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: A bleak book, but beautifully written and quick to read. Winter in a New England small town is rendered lovingly, almost appearing as its own character within the story.

A reader from NORTHAMPTON read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: A tragic classic about a farmer in a loveless marriage who has fallen for his wife's young cousin. None of the characters are particularly likable but the writing is good. I needed to try this book again after reading it for the first time in high school. 3/5 stars overall.

A reader from Feeding Hills read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: I chose this novella because I made a mid-Jan commitment to the challenge. Nevertheless I had considered and looked thru some other full length book possibilities and kept coming back to this one...the writing is so beautiful (particularly the descriptions of the environment and the town of Starkfield...I felt like I was there!). I have never read anything by Edith Wharton previously and I enjoyed this tremendously. Highly recommend as a read to compliment our current bleak New England winter.

A reader from South Hadley read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: This bleak classic fits the "winter" theme for this month almost too well. Winter is a setting, a character, a force throughout. Snow and ice drive the plot and the mood.

A reader from Pepperell read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: I would like to read more of this author. I've been to her house in Lenox!

A reader from Upton read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: Set in the village of Starkfield Massachusetts, where the winters are bitter cold and harsh; lives a poor farmer. Ethan Frome is just trying to make ends meet tending to his farm as well as tending to his aging mother. With the passing of his mother, he marries Zeena the caretaker he hired. Enters Mattie, Zeena's cousin who comes to live with them. Ethan becomes quite fond of the young and lovely Mattie. And so, a tale of irony unfolds in this tragic novel within the Frome household.

A reader from Groveland read *Ethan Frome* by Melissa D'Amico: A classic that I hadn't read before. As a life long New Englander, it set a perfect winter backdrop. A short story, but intricately woven. I enjoyed it.

A reader from North Attleboro read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: A heart rending look at the bleak lives of some 19th century New Englanders.

A reader from Woburn read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: A great short story. lots of depth for what seems like a simple story.

A reader from Waltham read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: A concise and efficient character and regional study.

A reader from Heath read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: It's sad how trapped people can become when they don't have the strength to stand up for themselves.

A reader from Peabody read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: Haven't read this since high school! I had forgotten how much I enjoy it!

A reader from Charlton read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: I was pleasantly surprised with this novella by Edith Wharton. I found it at my local library and had no idea what the story was about. But the writing was captivating and made me feel like I was following along Ethan in this small New England town. I could not put it down once I started and was surprised about the ending. Pick it up and give it a shot!

A reader from BEVERLY read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: This was a reread for me. I read this in high school and remember being awed by it, and I continue to be on this second read. Wharton masterfully captures the bleakness of Ethan's life as well as the

harsh beauty of New England winters in such a short story. It's no wonder she's continued to be one of my favorite authors. Rating: 5/5

A reader from Plymouth read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: I read this book years ago, but couldn't remember the details of the story. Loved her descriptions of the scenery and the strong feelings of Ethan, especially. I visited The Mount, Edith Wharton's home in the Berkshires this past fall. I'm going to read more books by her this year.

A reader from Seekonk read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: This book hooks you from the start. The judicious dialog and the detailed description of the landscape draw you into the town of Starkfield, MA and into the life of one of its residents, Ethan Frome. You are compelled to know about this man and the events that shaped his life and this book does not disappoint. As the story progresses, the reader can see how Winter increasingly plays a pivotal role, becoming entwined with and influencing Ethan's eventual fate. Recommend highly.

A reader from Charlton read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: I was pleasantly surprised at how much I liked this book! At first, I was hesitant to read this book because I thought it would be boring and hard to read. It was quite the opposite! I loved Wharton's beautiful and abundant descriptions of scenes and winter landscapes. I found myself reading at a slower rate so I could really absorb and enjoy all that was written. I was also impressed at the depth of the characters. It seems Wharton really took the time to create characters that, as you get further into the story, you can connect and sympathize with. By the end of the story I was really rooting for the characters!

A reader from Reading read *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton: Hadn't read this in decades-struck by the relationship between its vivid winter imagery, and the emotional life of the main characters.

A reader from Chelmsford read *Evensong* by Stewart O'Nan: A wonderful tale of women who've banded together to help each other through life's trials and tribulations as we get older...and our pets. It's a great read for anyone looking for a touching read about friendship that takes us through the fall into early winter, I'd highly recommend this.

A reader from Belchertown read *Evensong* by Gail Godwin: A little slow for me in some parts, with many Catholic-specific terms I had to look up. I read "Father Melancholy's Daughter" last year, so I was familiar with the main character and her history. The story line was good but took a long time to develop and in the end, changed from narration to a letter being addressed to someone.

A reader from Brookfield read *Everyone in My Family Has Killed Someone* by Benjamin Stevenson: *Everyone in My Family Has Killed Someone* is a well written murder mystery

surrounding a dysfunctional family. Fitting this month's theme, the Cunningham family has their family reunion at an Australian ski resort (in winter) and finds themselves wrapped up in a murder. I found the writing to be witty, humorous, and refreshingly self-aware. The pacing is pretty slow in the beginning but I feel like the ending wraps it all together and pays off. Overall, I really enjoyed the premise of a writer who knows the rules of mystery novels being placed into one.

A reader from Springfield read *Early Riser* by Jasper Fforde: 'Early Riser', by Jasper Fforde is a weird, cold, "cli-fi noir" alternate future where most of humanity hibernates to survive the winter. Fforde has a way of making a (not so?) absurd premise feel completely logical and thought-out. If you like dry British humor mixed with a 'cozy-dystopian' mystery, you will like this book.

A reader from Tewksbury read *First Blood* by Angela Marsons: An exciting thriller that I would have passed over if not for this challenge! The snowy setting was an exciting place for this murder mystery to unfold!

A reader from Cambridge read *Five Total Strangers* by Natalie Richards: This book is set in December where planes are grounded because of a snow storm. Five young adults/ teens rent a car and drive home, Mira soon realizes that these people do not know each other and one is trying to sabotage the drive. It was good but took 1/4 of the way to get interesting. I couldn't put it down but it did leave me unsatisfied because the ending felt rushed after that huge buildup. I wish less happened in the middle and more happened at the end/ to wrap it up. 4/5 stars

A reader from Beverly read *Five Total Strangers* by Natalie D. Richards: Mira is a talented young artist in high school traveling home for the holidays from a show, but when a massive snowstorm grounds all planes at the airport, she's left stranded with no way home. Harper, Mira's cheery seatmate on her previous connecting flight, offers to drive her home in a rental car with a group of Harper's friends. As Mira journeys with them, she realizes they were never friends at all, and everyone in the car is actually a total stranger. This is a highly thrilling book about intense snowstorms, terrible drivers, and dangerous people. I highly recommend this to any reader who's always looking for dramatic twists and turns in their books!

A reader from Colrain read *Five Total Strangers* by Natalie D. Richards: Five (total) strangers are trying to get home for the holidays after all flights have been grounded. They're stuck in a car in dangerous conditions and everybody has something to hide. I predicted the big reveal before the climax, but it was still a really enjoyable read and I really like the author's writing style.

A reader from Wakefield read *Five Tuesdays in Winter* by Lily King: A series of short stories, primarily centered around family dynamics of people in New England, including a charming story about a man who falls in love with an employee at his second-hand book store when she comes over every Tuesday in winter to tutor his daughter.

A reader from peabody read *Five Tuesdays in Winter* by Lily King: Short story collection, some hits (North Sea) and some misses (Timeline) that I just couldn't get into.

A reader from Burlington read *Five Tuesdays in Winter* by Lily King: Technically well-written. Prose is evocative and the works of each story emerge seamlessly into the narrative. But what does this book do with those worlds? It makes observations about relationships, but to what end? I'm still not sure. I did think the last story was interesting though because, on reflection, it appears that all of the stories were observations of men. Men are cast as mainly passive in this sense, as the last sorry points out. But, observations of them is still central to every narrative in this book. And, I'm not sure if it does anything particularly interesting with these observations.

A reader from North Attleboro read *Five Tuesdays in Winter* by Lily King: I like this author's novels so I thought I would try this collection of her short stories. While I do think she is a good writer, it just confirmed to me that I don't really like short stories! It feels like reading one chapter of a book and then wondering what happened to the characters!

A reader from Westborough read *Five Tuesdays in Winter* by Lily King: It was so wonderful. I read this at the perfect time in my life. There are stories in here that make you feel every emotion, are relatable for every stage of life.

A reader from Beverly read *Five Tuesdays in Winter* by Lily King: I enjoyed the vignette style of these stories. Little windows into larger stories that are also satisfying of themselves.

A reader from Springfield read *Five Winters: A Novel* by Kitty Johnson: It has a very interesting format that moves the story through 5 years by skipping the story ahead to each December and only providing details from the year when necessary. Although it tackles some big themes, it is primarily a light-hearted and predictable story.

A reader from Beverly read *Force of Nature* by Jane Harper: Set in the Australian winter, a group of coworkers sets out on a hiking retreat as a bonding exercise one does not make it out alive. I enjoyed this book, I never realized Australia gets cold in the winter so it was interesting to read about a different version of wintertime than what I am used to. Each chapter left on a cliff hanger and the big plot reveal was at the very end.

A reader from Worcester read *Fox* by Joyce Carol Oates: While this book took place in late fall/winter, the seasons don't play major factors in the story. The book was very well written,

each character's voice and point of view distinct, and the use of unreliable narrators really threw an interesting wrench into the story. I highly recommend this book.

A reader from New Bedford read *Frankenstein* by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley: Much of the story was set in the icy seas and chilly months of winter.

A reader from Mendon read *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley: Definitely different writing style than books written today. I had watched the movie that just came out and I was curious how it compared. It was slow to begin, but then it picked up. I was also going between kindle and a hard copy. I didn't realize that there are 2 versions. The 1818 and the 1835. I ended up reading the 1818. It did make me want to revisit some other classic novels this year!

A reader from Methuen read *Franny and Zooey* by J D Salinger: This one is cheating a little. It takes place during late fall, but that is basically winter! This is a good book for anyone interested in complex characters having interesting dialogue about philosophy and religion.

A reader from Somerville read *Franny and Zooey*: Set during college winter break. Entirely run by dialogue, which was interesting!

A reader from Arlington read *Front Page Teaser* by Rosemary Herbert: Initially set at Christmas time and locally written, it offers a very familiar winter in the city landscape as a backdrop to an absorbing murder mystery. The detective is a newspaper reporter who is always working on getting the big scoop that will land her front page status, and we have the privilege of tagging along with her every step of the way as she tries to solve the crime and juggle life decisions at the same time.

A reader from Brookline read *Frozen* by Ann Cleeves: This was my introduction to a new detective—Vera Stanhope—and I'm so glad I've found a new "friend". If you've read Elly Griffith's Ruth Galloway series you may find yourself thinking that Vera and Ruth could be friends. Looking forward to getting to know more (and solving more mysteries with) Vera in the rest of the series!

A reader from Beverly read *Frozen in Time: An Epic Story of Survival and a Modern Quest for Lost Heroes of World War 2* by Mitchell Zuckoff: This book holds accounts from military men stuck on Greenland during World War 2 after their plane crashed during a rescue mission. The book shares detailed accounts of the rescue efforts set out by the United States military to save these men. The book also gives a detailed account of a modern day expedition set forth to find and bring home a separate rescue plane that went down over Greenland and retrieve the bodies of the only two missing Coast Guard members.

A reader from Sandwich read *Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Historical fiction about a midwife in Maine in the late 1700s. Enjoyed this book.

A reader from Roslindale read *Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: A compelling read centered around a murdered body discovered in a frozen river in Maine. This historical fiction novel is heavily researched by the author and was a quick read.

A reader from Braintree read *Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Inspiring story.

A reader from Somerville read *Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: This was my favorite kind of historical fiction. A fictional story based on an actual person. Martha Ballard was a midwife in 1700's New England who kept a professional journal documenting her cases. The story that Ariel Lawhon weaved based on the journal entries was riveting, educational, emotional, and inspiring. I rated it a 4.5 out of 5.

A reader from North Attleborough read *Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: A captivating read based on the life of an amazing midwife.

A reader from Beverly read *Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: This book was fantastic! I started out the month reading 3 books and *Frozen River* was the only one I finished because it was the one I kept reaching for. The main character, real life Martha Ballard, had the perfect amount of sass and warmth. The story was exciting and there were several times where I thought I had figured it out, only to find out I was wrong- which I LOVE! It made me laugh out loud and cry which is tough to get out of me as a reader. Definitely hit the winter vibes and was a wonderful way to kick off my TBR for 2026!

A reader from Middleboro read *Frozen River* by Ariel Lawson: A great historical fiction about Martha Ballard. Details about family love marriage make this so readable you don't want to put it down. Takes place in a New England atmosphere. The frigid environment is so much part of this story. Loved it.

A reader from Belchertown read *Frozen River* by ariel lawhon: A good New England winter read.

A reader from Austin read *Game Changer* by Rachel Reid: The first book in the heated rivalry universe. A very cute romcom set in New York City taking place over some of the colder months.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Game Changer* by Rachel Reid: Listen... hockey is a winter sport. The Heated Rivalry show and this book series have taken over my mind. The story is heartfelt, funny, and steamy. So, this is what I'm doing this January.

A reader from Franklin read *Game Changer* by Reid: This was a good intro into the heated rivalry world but overall the lead characters are less likeable than the characters in the rest of the series.

A reader from Salem read *Game Changer* by Rachel Reid: Like many others I have been bit by the Heated Rivalry bug!

A reader from Cambridge read *Game Changer* by Rachel Reid: This one is a bittttt of a stretch given this month's prompt, but the bulk of the action in this one takes place in winter. I had to give this series a try after watching Heated Rivalry and I gotta say, I'm hooked on hockey romances!!

A reader from Monson read *Game Changer* by Rachel Reid: A hockey romance that takes place over the course of one season. The first book in the series that inspired the show Heated Rivalry.

A reader from Marblehead read *Girl in Ice* by Erica Ferencik: While not technically set in winter, *Girl in Ice* by Erica Ferencik might as well be winter since it is brutally cold even in autumn in the Arctic Circle in Greenland. I rooted for Val, an accomplished linguist dealing with the mysterious death of her twin brother, as she tries to understand a girl found in ice speaking an unknown language. The descriptions of both the landscape and language structures will stick with me for a while.

A reader from Weymouth read *Girl Under Glass* by Ginny Rorby: Nice YA novel about a delinquent girl who gets placed for probation with a biologist who believes in plant communication. The plants become the only witness to an assault on the biologist. Cute, and nice ending.

A reader from Duxbury read *Golden Eye* by Kate Quinn: I thought this was a fascinating book about a courageous woman. I enjoyed the unlikely friendship between the main character and a certain First Lady as well.

A reader from Reading read *Good Spirits* by B.K. Borison: This was the perfect light read as the first book I read this year! I love rom coms, and this one was a good combo. I liked both main characters.

A reader from Bondsville read *Good Spirits* by BK Borrison: I meant to read this one for Christmas, but my hold popped up in January so I decided to read it a little after the fact. A very sweet story, although a little predictable.

A reader from Hadley read *Good Spirits* by B.K. Borison: This was a very wholesome, merry, and sweet holiday romance read. Our main character is visited by the ghost of Christmas past, who is a very handsome Irishman, and they go on many past adventures and learn

more about themselves and each other along the way. It's semi predictable, a little cheesy, set in the month of December during winter, super festive, a bit sexy, and full of self discovery and love. An easy read to kick off the challenge. Worth the read but not mind blowing good. Just fun and festive and cozy. Not every read needs to be profound and life changing. Sometimes you just need a book to cozy up with.

A reader from Ipswich read *Good Spirits* by B.K. Borison: Fun, light read that follows a woman who is visited by the Ghost of Christmas Past throughout December leading up to Christmas. Unique premise! I liked: the setting and the FMC's development / journey with her family. I wish: there was more time/development given to the MMC, that the ending was less rushed / out of left field. Overall, a nice way to extend the Christmas spirit a little longer.

A reader from Ludlow read *Good Spirits* by B.K. Borison: For January's theme, I selected *Good Spirits* by B.K. Borison. The novel takes place during the Christmas season and incorporates festive elements such as Christmas trees, ice skating, and the male main character's role as the Ghost of Christmas Past. I appreciated the thoughtful and heartfelt development of the relationship between Harriet and Nolan as they explore one another's histories and personal experiences. Overall, the novel is a well-crafted holiday romance that provided a fitting conclusion to the Christmas season, despite being read in early January.

A reader from Middleton read *Good Spirits* by Borison, B. K.: Holiday-themed paranormal romance: sweet enough, if slight.

A reader from Brookline read *Good Spirits* by B.K. Borison: Cute and cozy winter read about the ghost of Christmas past haunting an antique store owner. They struggle to understand why he was assigned to haunt her. As they go back through her past memories, they start experiencing strange events regarding his memories.

A reader from Hamilton read *Grace and Henry's Holiday Movie Marathon* by Matthew Norman: Loved this sweet winter romance.

A reader from Dracut read *Gregg Olsen* by A Wicked Snow: Crime/mystery is not my favorite genre, but this was a really good story. Couldn't put it down

A reader from Rockland read *Guess and Pray* by Kim Swizz: I received *Guess and Pray* as an ARC and it's an absolutely beautiful story of growth and love. It starts off during winter in a small NH town with a snow loving kiddo, single mom, and golden retriever mmc who does not date who turns into a fake dating protective hero.

A reader from Burlington read *Half Spent Was the Night: A Witches' Yuletide* by Ami McKay: A magical mystery novella set in the Victorian era on New Year's Eve. It was an enjoyable quick read for wintry day, but I do recommend reading the 1st book before picking this one up.

A reader from raynham read *Hammered* by Kevin Hearne: Atticus O'Sullivan guides a group of other long lived people to Asgard to settle their score with Thor. Much of the book is set in the wintry worlds of Asgard, Jotunheim, and various Scandinavian settings.

A reader from Wilmington read *Happy Bloody Christmas* by Jo Middleton: One of the most fun and funny books that I've read in a long time. Easy to read, yet super engaging and addictive, I love how it was written. The main character is very relatable and she had me laughing out loud often. There's a sequel I might have to investigate, hoping it's as good as this one!

A reader from Brighton read *Have Yourself a Fudgy Little Christmas* by Nancy Coco: A local hotel/fudge shop owner on Mackinac Island stumbles upon the body of a young woman while helping the island decorate for Christmas. She decides she needs to help find out who killed her after her friend is implicated in the murder.

A reader from Amesbury read *Hazelnuts and Homicide* by N.E Carlisle: Cute cozy murder mystery that takes place around Christmas. It's the first in what sounds like will be a series of murder mysteries. Kind of reminded me of the Joanne Fluke Chocolate chip cookie murder.

A reader from Haverhill read *He knows when you're awake* by Alta Hensley: Sloan is approached by millionaire Cole while out one day to invest in her Jewelry designs for his winter collection. What Sloane don't know is that he's been secretly watching her this whole time.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Heartstopper* by Alice Oseman: Set in the winter season. About two high school boys developing a friendship that has the potential to become more. Inspired the Netflix series of the same name.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Heartstopper* by Alice Oseman: The graphic novel that inspired the popular Netflix series of the same name. Follows the beginning on a relationship between Nick and Charlie. Nick a popular rugby player at school who it struggling with understanding his sexuality. Until he met Charlie, he never had liked a boy in a romantic way. It is the sweet start of a high school relationship.

A reader from Springfield read *Heated Rivalry* by Rachel Reid: It's about a winter sport, so a lot of it takes place during winter.

A reader from Freetown read *Heated Rivalry* by Rachel Reid: Hockey romance = winter book. I love Shane & Ilya with my whole heart.

A reader from Arlington read *Heated Rivalry* by Rachel Reid: With the television adaptation being incredibly successful, I thought I would check out the book. I thought it was a good sports romance with compelling characters. Great quick read to get the year started.

A reader from Beverly read *Emily Wilde's Encyclopaedia of Faeries* by Heather Fawcett: This was fun! I liked the winter and the cozy small town fantasy.

A reader from North Attleboro read *Henry Knox's Noble Train: The Story of a Boston Bookseller's Heroic Expedition That Saved the American Revolution* by William Elliott Azelgrove: From book description: The inspiring story of a little-known hero's pivotal role in the American Revolutionary War During the brutal winter of 1775-1776, an untested Boston bookseller named Henry Knox commandeered an oxen train hauling sixty tons of cannons and other artillery from Fort Ticonderoga near the Canadian border. He and his men journeyed some three hundred miles south and east over frozen, often-treacherous terrain to supply George Washington for his attack of British troops occupying Boston.

A reader from New Bedford read *Her Darkest Nightmare* by Brenda Novak: First book in the series. Murder in a small remote town. Psychopaths being house next door. Winter storms in Alaska to slow them down. Absolutely loved it!

A reader from Braintree read *Hercule Poirot Mysteries: The Last Death of the Year* by Sophie Hannah: Though Agatha Christie did not write this Hercule Poirot Mystery, it is very much in her style of writing. It is still based in the same time period. This was a clever mystery keeping me guessing until the end. If you like Agatha Christie and have read and reread her novels. Trying reading Sophie Hannah's Hercule Poirot Mysteries.

A reader from North Andover read *Hercule Poirot's Christmas* by Agatha Christie: Typical of Christie, murder in a locked room and only the deceased is found in the room. WHO did it? The staff or family members?

A reader from Cohasset read *Hercule Poirot's Christmas* by Agatha Christie: The set up of this book seemed to very much like that of *Knives Out*. A locked door murder of the family patriarch over the Christmas holidays and the only suspects being his own close relations. Of course this being Agatha Christie it had less humor and more twists and turns. Never the less I could not put the audiobook down. I simply had to know who done it.

A reader from Springfield read *Hilda: The Wilderness Stories* by Luke Pearson: Hilda is a delightful and insightful story, whether told through graphic novel or animation.

A reader from Chicopee read *Hogfather* by Terry Pratchett: My first foray into Discworld that wasn't through the Tiffany Aching series, this was a fun wintry romp, with lots of laughs and clever one-liners, as is expected from Pratchett.

A reader from South Hadley read *Holiday Ever After* by Hannah Grace: New favorite holiday com-rom trope unlocked: building snowpeople! I was craving a holiday-themed com-rom and had no doubt that Hannah Grace's newest book would satisfy. She didn't disappoint. If you're in the mood for a city girl falling in love with a small town packed full of charm and holiday spirit, *Holiday Ever After* has all of that and more.

A reader from Franklin read *Holidays on Ice* by David Sedaris: Very funny book.

A reader from Tewksbury read *Home in Time for Christmas* by Heather Graham: nice holiday read.

A reader from Marshfield read *Hot Winter Nights* by Jill Shalvis: The book was about an investigation as people were taking advantage of senior citizens. Also a love story about when you meet the right person, scars and history is accepted and sometimes celebrated. An easy enjoyable read.

A reader from Northampton read *House of Frost and Feathers* by Lauren Wiesebron: A great cast of characters, but not great enough to make up for the scattered plot.

A reader from Springfield read *How My Neighbor Stole Christmas* by Meghan Quinn: This book started really slow and took me more than 100 pages before I found a storyline with potential. Ultimately the base story is a pretty standard romance novel. Be warned there are some pages that get a bit graphic. I had a hard time getting over the less than creative character names and ultimately didn't read any of the silly poems or the breaking of the fourth wall dialogue. Really only finished this book because the winter setting fit this challenge.

A reader from Northampton read *How to Survive in the North* by Luke Healy: Great graphic novel!

A reader from Haverhill read *How to Winter* by Kari Leibowitz: I am so grateful to my coworker for recommending this book to me. It has some great information and has inspired me to get out and enjoy all that winter has to offer.

A reader from Pittsfield read *How to Winter* by Kari Leibowitz: Because of this book, I am embracing winter. I love the way she writes about changing people's minds about winter, one person at a time. I also loved the advice about if you dress for winter, then you won't be as cold, and it won't seem so bad.

A reader from Lowell read *How to Winter* by Kari Leibowitz: This book has excellent advice about how to make winter not only more bearable, but a season to look forward to.

A reader from Wilmington read *How to Winter* by Kari Leibowitz: So many great takeaways from the book, can't wait to start implementing them!

A reader from Beverly read *How to Winter* by Kari Leibowitz: This book is helping me enjoy winter. It is based from the authors research and is a fun read. Some great strategies are noted at the end of each chapter and it was so interesting to read about different "cold" cultures.

A reader from Arlington read *How to Winter* by Kari Leibowitz, PhD: I read this book because I am feeling more and more brought down by winter. And, this book really did help provide concrete ways to combat the "winter blues". Many of the strategies can be applied to other challenges or areas of your life. It was well researched and written and easy to read. Would recommend!

A reader from West Newbury read *How to Winter* by Kari Leibowitz: A nice way to bring together many mindfulness based strategies in a new way.

A reader from Wellfleet read *How to Winter* by Kari Leibowitz: The author of this book has travelled the world investigating the mindset of people who love the cold and wintry season. She explores the health benefits of wanting to be outdoors observing nature, and discovering the beauty of nature. This is a book that shares the psychological benefits of learning to enjoy winter.

A reader from AUBURN read *How to Winter* by Kari Leibowitz: An excellent book on practical strategies to not hate winter so much. It's easy to follow and she shares her own experience changing her thinking on this dreary season. Her ideas are simple yet really helpful. I may have to reread every year to appreciate the beauty of winter.

A reader from Reading read *How to Winter* by Keri Leibowitz: This was a perfect read for January to help pivot my mindset from "it's almost over" to "what can be great about this."

A reader from Braintree read *Hygge and Lagom DIY Bundle* by Maya Thoresen: Audio book. Good, but part 2 was repetitive of much of part 1. Understandable since both concepts overlap.

A reader from Greenfield read *I Have Some Questions for You* by Rebecca Makkai: A surprising reflection and subsequent investigation on a significant point of the narrator's past, set at her old boarding school in New Hampshire in the winter. Lots of characters and plenty to keep you guessing.

A reader from Seekonk read *I'll Be Home For Christmas* by Jenny Bayliss: This novel set in winter was about a woman with her life not going well, moves back to the British town that she couldn't wait to leave as she felt she hadn't fit in. She returns and becomes involved with the family's Christmas cracker business and comes to know through friends and family in the Christmas season that she does have a place in her community.

A reader from Quincy read *I'm Thinking of Ending Things* by Iain Reid: This book felt like winter- frigid and gorgeous. A chilling (pun intended) tale of love, loss and values, I highly recommend this quick wintery read.

A reader from Melrose read *I'm thinking of ending things* by Iain Reid: Haunting and beautifully written.

A reader from Holbrook read *I'm Thinking of Ending Things* by Iain Reid: I wasn't sure what to make of this book at first. It was eerie and ominous and I had no clue what was going to happen. That said, by the end, I enjoyed the very bizarre reveal about the main character. I tend to like horror that has moments where you question reality and this book was perfect for that!

A reader from Franklin read *Ice Hunt* by James Rollins: This is a rollicking adventure novel set on the polar ice cap. Battling both wind and other enemies, the heroes must work together to survive. I highly recommend this to anyone who enjoys adventurous fiction.

A reader from Sudbury read *Ice Planet Barbarians* by Ruby Dixon: I read this over a weekend that happened to snow for three days straight and this book takes place on a snowy planet with the characters trudging through the snow trying to save the humans who crash landed on a foreign ice planet. It was a very fitting read for January!

A reader from Newton read *Icebreaker* by Hannah Grace: A hockey star and a figure skater fall in love and navigate the challenges that life and college throw at them. It has good moments, but it lacks some character development and there are some moments that seem a bit too far and take me out of the read.

A reader from Boston read *If Not, Winter, Fragments of Sappho* by Sappho, Anne Carson translator: I enjoyed this translation of Sappho's poetry. The author translated the poems, including fragments, using spacing and brackets to show which parts within each poem are missing. The author in her introduction emphasizes that Sappho's poetry is lyric; that is, meant to be sung. The translation is simple and lovely. The poems describe feelings of love, longing, entreaty; there's a feeling of immediacy. I feel sad that so much of Sappho's work is lost.

A reader from Andover read *If Not, Winter, Fragments of Sappho* by Anne Carson: Reviewing the physical properties of a book before discussing its contents is like focusing on a stage set instead of a play. But it is a revealing approach to take with Anne Carson's "If Not, Winter, Fragments of Sappho," translations of this Greek poet from the 7th century B.C. We have one complete poem by Sappho; the rest are in fragments ranging from a handful of almost complete poems to many that exist only as a phrase or single word. Carson is a poet, translator and classics scholar and sometimes all three at once. She often engages with classical literature in ways that unsettle received notions and provide new perspectives on ancient works. Several of Carson's works also manipulate the typography and layout of her texts, or embellish them with illustrations and designs, to enhance her messages. In "If Not, Winter," she is deliberate about giving each fragment enough space to evoke the entire poem from which it came, so that they seem haunted by what is missing. There are many examples where a single line of poetry is the sole occupant of a page. Carson also includes Sappho's Greek texts on a facing page, so we never lose sight of each fragment's origins. In addition, the book's cover reproduces in color a single piece of papyrus with Sappho's words, so we can see how it was first published and feel that we are handling an archaeological find. Like the fragments inside the book, the papyrus is surrounded by white space. These effects make it seem as if we are discovering Sappho's texts for ourselves, before anyone else has read or interpreted them, and that experience is also embodied in the way Carson has translated the texts. Over the centuries, translators have been unable to resist a temptation to fill the emptiness surrounding Sappho's fragments by embellishing and reimagining her work. But Carson wants to strip all that away by limiting her translations as much as possible to what Sappho wrote. This is evident in her choice of title, a stray line from fragment 22. "If not" is something we might say to turn away from some number of possibilities that we have been considering, while "winter" introduces an alternative. It is impossible to say what is actually being considered, but you can see that the phrase operates as a pivot in some sentence, helping to drive an unfolding train of thought. If that isn't as satisfying as a complete poem, maybe that is all that a poem at heart consists of or needs to be. Sappho's poems are often about struggling with desire, and Carson may be saying that readers of Sappho are likewise engaged in struggling with an impulse to fill the blank spaces of her texts, while also staying true to the words that they love. This is true of any translation, but the fragmentary nature of Sappho's text forces readers to fully confront that reality.

A reader from Arlington read *If Not, Winter: Fragments of Sappho* by Anne Carson, translator: So much of what we hear of Sappho is about loss: how few of her poems survive, how little we know of her life. But Carson's translations (the notes for which are

their own fascinating read) and structure choices breathe such life into Sappho's words that it is as if the poet is sitting beside us and confiding the contents of her heart.

A reader from Cambridge read *If on a winter's night a traveler* by Italo Calvino: What a fantastic, refreshing book! While not very thematically linked to winter, the titled compelled me to read it for the January challenge and what a fascinating read it was! Every story was as exciting as the last one and while in the beginning I was disappointed to have to let go of each to start the next, by the end I was satisfied by the short narrative hits and the genre they paid homage to and the mysteries they left unanswered. If the hardest thing to write is a good hook, here Italo Calvino is just showing off.

A reader from Cambridge read *If on a winter's night a traveler* by Italo Calvino: this book delighted me. it is best entered with no context. by the end, i was highlighting almost every paragraph with feverish intensity. as soon as i finished, i started again from chapter one.
10/10

A reader from Melrose read *If on a winter's night a traveler* by Italo Calvino: For this challenge, I've decided only to read books I already own, and I've been intending to read, I had this one both in audible and Kindle format. I had preconceptions about the book which did not apply at all. I thought it would be some kind of corny folktale (the title, maybe)- instead it was this crazy mélange of suspense and discussion about reading. Didn't honestly have much to do with winter so I read something else as well with winter in the title in my Library.

A reader from Centerville read *In the Barren Ground* by Loreth Anne White: One of my favorite authors! Rookie cop Tana is the sole police officer of 17,500 sq miles in the Arctic Circle. She needs the help of the local bush pilot to get to a remote crime scene. They have to work together to protect the town from the frozen dark.

A reader from Saugus read *In the Midst of Winter* by Isabel Allende: While this book was not what I was expecting, the story definitely kept me engaged. 3 people, all with tragic backgrounds, brought together by a very difficult situation. I did like how it explored immigration and being undocumented. While the main plot seemed a bit over the top, learning about the background of the characters kept it interesting for me.

A reader from Acton read *In the Midst of Winter* by Isabel Allende: The main characters were beautifully portrayed, very believable despite their extraordinary life circumstances. Their backstories are powerful and relevant. This is not a predictable story!

A reader from Framingham read *In The Midst of Winter* by Isabel Allende: Such a rich story! The commentary about life in Guatemala and Rio, plus the present-day story that was at times tragic, tender, and hilarious, made for a magnificent book.

A reader from Northfield read *In the Midst of Winter* by Isabel Allende: This story was both heartbraking and heartwarming. Each person had sad stories from their past but they worked together to help Evelyn escape a bad situation.

A reader from Wilmington read *In the Midst of Winter* by Isabel Allende: This audiobook features three fine readers, two sympathetic women characters, and one unlikeable man, all with connections to Central and South America. Lucia, a college professor, had suffered from the repressive regime in Chile, lost family members, and immigrated to America. Her mother has never recovered from the disappearance of her son. Evelyn, from Guatemala, was raped and assaulted by members of the MS-13 gang, who kills both of her brothers. In the most riveting narrative of the book, she is befriended by a priest who works with a smuggler to get her over the Mexican border to her mother, who had emigrated years earlier. She ends up being a nanny to a wealthy Brooklyn family. In the Snowmageddon of 2015, she is rear-ended by Richard, a professor who owns the home in Brooklyn where Lucia is a tenant, and shows up at Richard's house the day after the snowstorm in a state of panic and fear of her brutal employer. The discovery of a body in the trunk of Evelyn's car sets off the trio's attempt to save Evelyn and allows the author to explore the backgrounds of all three protagonists. Richard's story is filled with horror due to his own actions, which might be the worst of all. The suspense, back stories, and resolution are all satisfying.

A reader from Falmouth read *In the midst of winter* by Isabel Allende: Not so well written, and as the story progresses, it strains credibility. But the stories of the 2 women from Chile and Guatemala are heartbreaking reminders of the turmoil that still goes on today.

A reader from East Falmouth read *In the Midst of Winter* by Isabel Allende: Not my favorite of her books but contained some interesting insights about the immigrant experience.

A reader from Pepperell read *In the midst of winter* by Isabel Allende: This was a difficult book to finish. I thought the characters put themselves in ridiculous situations, and found that I didn't care about them.

A reader from Blackstone read *In the Midst of Winter* by Isabel Allende: I found this book impossible to put down! The narrative follows three vastly different individuals from separate countries whose lives intersect through a twist of fate on a winter night, immediately drawing the reader in. As the characters develop, the novel gradually reveals the atrocities each has endured—experiences that shape their paths and ultimately lead them to the United States. A compelling read - I would highly recommend!

A reader from South Hadley read *In the midst of winter* by Isabel Allende: I liked this book a lot, although I felt that the author spent way too much time telling the characters' life stories and not enough furthering the plot.

A reader from Melrose read *In the Midst of Winter* by Isabel Allende: The events of this story's murder mystery takes place during a major Two day snowstorm in Brooklyn N.Y. After a minor car accident three individual's lives are brought together by fate. A young undocumented immigrant nanny, a professor, who crashed his car into her and the tenant who lives in an apartment of the professor have to deal with the situation they find themselves. The young immigrant is frightened to bring the employer's car back and in the process finds a body rolled up in a rug stuffed in the trunk. The story discloses the troubled lives of all three individuals and how they try and work out solutions of dealing with the murder victim. The story takes many twists and turns and keeps you interested in how things are going to be resolved.

A reader from Carver read *In the Midst of Winter* by Isabel Allende: Who would think that anything could happen in a shutdown city in the middle of a snowstorm? Well the characters in Isabel Allende's novel *In the Midst of Winter* would tell you that the snowstorm changed their lives forever! The tale jumps back and forth between the present in Brooklyn and each person's past in a different South American country. Each story binds the characters closer together. It makes you wonder what you would do if you found yourself in this predicament.

A reader from Fall River read *In the midst of winter* by Isabel allende: Isabel Allende does what she does best and paints the lives of 3 people. She writes about their lives and what lead them to the journey. I have always enjoyed how she brings to life each of her characters flaws and all. She will always be a favorite of mine.

A reader from Gardner read *In the Midst of Winter* by Isabel Allende: A moving story about immigrant experiences and growth after tragedy.

A reader from Salisbury read *In the Midst of Winter* by Isabel Allende: A car accident during a winter storm brings together a lonely professor, an undocumented young immigrant and a academic from Chile. It's amazing to consider that this was written in 2017.

A reader from Hanover read *In the Midst of Winter* by Isabel Allende: The book has 3 main characters, Lucia, Richard, and Evelyn. Their past which includes the horrible political turmoil and gruesome killings in Peru, Guatemala, and Brazil are all a part of the back story of these people's lives. Richard, a professor at New York University asks Lucia to be a guest teacher from Chile for a year. They had an intellectual friendship in the past which could become more if they communicated with each other. Richard, during the worst storm in Brooklyn's history (2015) had a sick cat emergency and hits the car of Evelyn, an undocumented immigrant from Guatemala. Evelyn later asks for Richard's help and he asks Lucia to help him. There is a dead person in the trunk of Evelyn's car, and then the

"adventure" begins. Who to trust and what to do? This book does not shy away from the atrocities that poor people in those countries experienced and the difficulty being an immigrant seeking asylum.

A reader from Ashland read *In the Midst of Winter* by Isabel Allende: I thoroughly enjoyed reading *In the Midst of Winter* and was pleasantly surprised by the range of emotions it evoked. I especially appreciated learning about the political and social issues woven through the different settings—Brazil, Brooklyn, Canada, Chile, and Guatemala—which added depth and richness to the story. I also loved the love story between Lucia and Richard, particularly how their relationship slowly brewed and evolved over time. Overall, it was a lovely and engaging read. ★★★★★ (4 stars)

A reader from Greenfield read *Into the West* by Mercedes Lackey: Second book in *The Founding of Valdemar* series sees the escapees from the Empire traveling west trying to find a safe place to live before winter fully sets in.

A reader from Dartmouth read *Isola* by Allegra Goodman: Only a portion of this book takes place in winter. But here, winter is a character. It is transformative, a crucible even, for Marguerite. The author brings these characters and the 16th century to life. It was a fascinating look at the status of women and the role religion played in their lives. I was transported and invested, not to mention heartbroken.

A reader from East Bridgewater read *Isola* by Allegra Goodman: France 1500s, Marguerite is left orphaned and in the care of a guardian who loses her home and fortune. Forced to travel by boat to the New World, Marguerite is left to survive in the wilderness for many months. A story of survival and strength.

A reader from Jaffrey read *Isola* by Allegra Goodman: Fictionalized true story of a 16th century woman who was abandoned on an uninhabited island off the coast of Canada with her lover and her maid. Winters were brutally cold with little shelter or food.

A reader from PEPPERELL read *Isola* by Allegra Goodman: *Isola* is a historical fiction novel that really stays with you. It's a heavy, emotional read, filled with loss, struggle, and so much heartache. Inspired by the real-life story of a woman from the 16th century, the novel follows Marguerite, who is betrayed, punished, and ultimately cast away on a remote island. Cut off from everything she has ever known, survival becomes a daily fight against the elements, loneliness, and despair. There were times when it felt almost overwhelming, especially as the characters faced trial after trial and questioned whether they could keep going at all. What stayed with me most was the strength to keep going, even in moments when doubt took over and giving up felt easier. It's not an easy book, but it's a powerful one.

A reader from Medford read *It's a Fabulous Life* by Kelly Farmer: I really enjoyed this book, which was a 'modern day retelling' of 'It's a Wonderful Life.' (F.ex characters included Bailey George and Clara Angel). Set in the winter time during a small town Christmas Festival, it was a perfect read for the beginning of January ... and it helped me to extend the Christmas spirit for another few weeks.

A reader from Weston read *It's Winter!* by Renee Kurilla: It was a great book! It told about all the holidays that happen in the wintertime. You can celebrate them all even if they are not part of your family's history. The pictures were great and I liked the way the words rhymed. It was fun to read!.

A reader from Wilmington read *It's Winter!* by Renee Kurilla: I liked how it talked about different activities you can do in the winter.

A reader from Worcester read *Jane and the Twelve Days of Christmas* by Stephanie Barron: This is a perfect book if you are a Jane Austen fan and a lover of mysteries. The novel's biographical details about the Austens are well-researched and if you like this book, there are many others in this series.

A reader from Auburn read *Jane and the Twelve Days of Christmas* by Stephanie Barron: Jane Austen must solve a murder mystery

A reader from Lowell read *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte: A headstrong, resilient, intelligent female protagonist navigating a dark, sometimes eerie Victorian winter setting in pursuit of being an independent woman.

A reader from Belchertown read *Januaries* by Olivie Blake: This was a book full of short story collections that happen in different seasons. I'm glad I read it but it ended up not being the book for me.

A reader from Greenfield read *Joy to the Girls* by Rachael Lippincott and Alyson Derrick: Very sweet and very, very wintry. Hot cocoa, Christmas trees, ice skating, the works.

A reader from Eastham read *Kate Milford* by Greenglass House: Very entertaining story set in an inn, snowed in with odd guests. A young boy tries to figure out how they connect. Plot twist at the end surprised me. Complex and engrossing.

A reader from Scituate read *Killer Cables: A Knitorious Murder Mystery* by Reagan Davis: A cosy knitter's mystery set in small town Canada. All the right tropes.

A reader from Woburn read *Kingdom of Sweets* by Erika Johansen: Beyond just a reimagining of the classic Nutcracker story, *The Kingdom of Sweets* is a truly unique and dark adaptation with sprinkles of Alice in Wonderland and Dante's Inferno, as Clara's twin sister

Natasha journeys into a twisted world where dark and light, good and evil at some points battle against each other, while at others, join forces for a morally ambiguous narrative.

A reader from Newton read *Kiss Her Once for Me* by Allison Cochrun: lovely lesbian christmastime romance.

A reader from Haverhill read *Klaus* by Grant Morrison and Dan Mora: *Klaus* by Grant Morrison and Dan Mora is a graphic novel about a warrior Santa Claus. The cold of winter appears in each of the two stories, while Klaus fights mostly alien creatures along side his white wolf, which leads a team of wolves that power his alien sleigh. It wasn't what I expected from Santa, but a fun read I found on the library staff pick shelf.

A reader from Beverly read *Knit the season* by Kate Jacobs: A great read for a crafter during the winter months!

A reader from Dedham read *Krampus: The Yule Lord* by Brom: This was a fun and chaotic read. It was full of Norse mythology and told the story of Krampus reclaiming what was stolen from him in the modern era. I would love to read a prequel that goes into more detail about the history between Santa and Krampus.

A reader from Orleans read *Land In Winter* by Andrew Miller: This was an incredibly atmospheric book set in winter. Sitting on my couch, with a blanket and a warmy, the descriptions of the cold and ice from the book felt more real than the winter storm of the decade that was raging outside. Also, great characters!

A reader from Winchester read *LaRose* by Louise Erdrich: Neighboring families who 'share' a son as Ojibwe tradition calls for when a terrible accident occurs.

A reader from Hadley read *Lawhon* by Ariel: I enjoyed how the story is set to the freezing and thawing of the Kennebec River. It accentuates the feel of isolation and societal pressures of the time.

A reader from Wareham read *Left Hand of Darkness* by Ursula K Le Guin: A book set in winter was the challenge so I chose a book set on a planet called Winter where even the summer is below freezing. An emissary from a collection of planets comes to the planet Winter to ask the inhabitants to join their coalition of planets. There he encounters people he does not understand. People who are non-binary, although the language for this wasn't really a thing when this book was written. He meets one person who he doesn't realize he should trust until it's almost too late. They forge a friendship/relationship through the hardships thrust upon them by misunderstandings and tyrannical governments. An early sci-fi book that brings agendered people to the fore. A dense sci-fi book and a book ahead of its time.

A reader from Amherst read *Let It Glow* by Marissa Meyer and Joanne Levy: A story of adopted identical twins discovering each other and swapping places (a la The Parent Trap) to experience each other's winter holidays (Christmas and Hanukkah).

A reader from Malden read *Let the Right One In* by John Ajvide Lindqvist: Very dark, very gruesome, but such a great book. It's a vampire classic for a reason! If you're a horror fan, definitely check this out. I can't wait to watch the movie now!

A reader from Ipswich read *Letters from Tove* by Tove Jansson: A celebration of all the seasons, if not only a meditation on winter. I return to these letters long after finishing them, reveling in their portraits of the natural world and Jansson's pillars of a fulfilling and joyful life: "work and love."

A reader from Natick read *Life on Svalbard: Finding Home on a Remote Island Near the North Pole* by Cecilia Blomdahl: This book offers a fascinating look at a Norwegian archipelago far north of the Arctic Circle, where seasons include polar night, pastel winter, sunny winter, polar day, and golden autumn. The photographs are stunning.

A reader from North Attleboro read *Light on Snow* by Anita Shreve: This book grabbed me from the first page. It is the story of a baby found in snowy woods by a father and his 12 year old daughter. Their backstory, though sad, really pulled me in, as well as their interaction with the mother who gave birth to the baby.

A reader from Uxbridge read *Lights All Night Long* by Lydia Fitzpatrick: This was a fun book set in two remote towns- one in Russia and one in the USA- and the story unfolds on an alternating timeline. The main character is a high-school exchange student who struggles with the idea of coming to the US to pursue a better life while also trying to save his family back home in Russia. The story touches on the concepts of addiction, belonging, and family bonds, and does a nice job of demonstrating how people from desperate appearing cultures are more alike than different. It's very well written and catches your attention- it kept me up at night and I finished it in just a few days!

A reader from Damascus read *Lillian Boxfish Takes a Walk* by Kathleen Rooney: Based loosely on ad copywriter for Macy's in 1930s (Margaret Fishback) about an 85 YO woman who spends new years eve walking and remembering life in NY. New word: Flaneur - a person who strolls around city in a seemingly endless way in order to experience the city.

A reader from Milford read *Lost in a Book an enchanting original story* by Jennifer Donnelly: Zoom in on how the relationship between Belle and the Beast developed while she was held captive in the castle. Learn about the struggles she faced as navigated her new life inside the castle.

A reader from Weymouth read *Lost Souls Meet Under a Full Moon: A Novel* by Mizuki Tsujimura: Interesting story about people who are allowed to meet - once - with someone dead, if they agree. The "go between" is a key part of these several interconnected stories. Quite resonant with Japanese sensibilities. Recommended.

A reader from Lynnfield read *Lovelight Farms* by B.K. Borison: A sweet story about two best friends, a social media contest, and a Christmas tree farm.

A reader from Ipswich read *Lovely Bones* by Alice Sebold: I really enjoyed the book! I watched the movie after finishing it and it was interesting to see the changes made from book to screen.

A reader from Freetown read *Lovely, Dark and Deep* by Amy McNamara: A quick l'il read someone left in my little free library. I kept it because of the title's nod to Frost (my mom's favorite poet.) A relatable (for most) walk (or run) through a deep winter or grief.

A reader from Quincy read *Made You Look* by Tanya Grant: A great read for a cold, cozy day!

A reader from Lee read *Madonna in a Fur Coat* by Sabahattin Ali: Set in the winter of 1920s Berlin. Many beautiful, meaningful words. This short novel was poetic and captured so much depth within its 200 pages. I love Turkish stories (their TV series + movies) and would love to read more books from Turkey. The love story in this is old-fashioned and such a foreign idea to modern readers. They fall in love very fast, very hard, and it becomes their entire world. I enjoy this idea of romance personally but can't recommend this book to everyone (without looking like a hopeless romantic).

A reader from South Grafton read *Madrigals and Mayhem* by Elizabeth Penney: Cozy murder mystery. The Cambridge Bookshop series is very good.

A reader from Braintree read *Make the Season Bright* by Ashley Herring Blake: This was an enjoyable read. Lighthearted but with some challenges, a great way to spend a snowy day.

A reader from Attleboro read *Make the Season Bright* by Ashley Herring Blake: This was a cute, sapphic story. It literally made me laugh out loud, which is an accomplishment. I enjoyed it wasn't as cookie cutter as some but still had a happy ending.

A reader from Heath read *Mammal Tracks and Sign of the Northeast* by Diane K Gibbons: Perfect book for winter reading with a lot of snow cover.

A reader from Springfield read *Marshmallow Mountain* by A.J. Truman, M.A. Wardell: This book was so cute. I love this second chance queer romance. I loved how they dealt with being snowed in. I can't wait to read more from these authors.

A reader from Orleans read *Mend the Living* by Maylis de Kerangal: Set over the course of one chilly winter day, a dramatic event is revealed through a diverse collection of individuals with distinct perspectives. Beautifully written in a unique and captivating style, en route to read more by this impressive author!

A reader from East Longmeadow read *Merrily Mine* by Jennifer Chipman: I thought that this book was a cute romance that got me in the wintry mood. It was about being snowed in together, and I read this during the snow storm, which made for the best reading atmosphere.

A reader from Methuen read *Merry Christmas, You Filthy Animal* by Meghan Quinn: Hallmark Christmas vibes for sure! Some parts made me laugh out loud! Definitely corny and cheesy in some parts but still overall a good story line.

A reader from Lowell read *Merry Christmas, You Filthy Animal* by Meghan Quinn: It made me laugh how the main characters end up meeting and falling in love.

A reader from Worcester read *Merry Christmas, You Filthy Animal!* by Meghan Quinn: This is the second in the author's Christmas series. I loved both of them and will definitely be reading some more of her work. I don't think I have ever laughed as much reading a book as I laughed at this one!!

A reader from Harwich read *Midwinter Break* by Bernard MacLaverty: A long-married couple in their 70s fly from Scotland to Amsterdam: is it a brief vacation, or an end to their marriage? Bernard MacLaverty's *Midwinter Break* is a lovely, character-driven novel whose evocative and elegant prose details the balance between intimacy, and that which remains unknowable, in ourselves and our partners.

A reader from Fairhaven read *Midwinter Murder: fireside tales from the Queen of Mystery* by Agatha Christie: The perfect winter read! Short stories from the world's best mystery writer, all set in the long, cold, dark days of winter and all featuring your favorite Christie detectives. My 2 favorite's in this collection were: "The Mystery of Hunter's Lodge" and "The World's End". I haven't picked up an Agatha Christie book in ages and this was the perfect return to her amazing writing, plot twists, engaging characters, and just plain good classic detective stories.

A reader from Brookline read *Midwives* by Chris Bohjalian: I chose this book based on the back cover description which stated, "On an icy winter night in an isolated house in rural Vermont..." Winter is not the main focus of the story (like *Ethan Frome*), but what occurred on that icy winter night turned a home birth emergency into a tragedy for a mother and her family, and the midwife and her family. The story is told by the midwife's daughter and is set in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont where midwives facilitate home births. There is a

criminal trial which pits the passionate midwife against the State which appears to try to get all births to occur in the hospital. The midwife keeps journals for herself. I won't spoil the plot, but those journals and the daughter are pivotal in the outcome of a trial with a real twist at the end. The plot held my interest. I was particularly interested in how a male writer wrote with such command about midwives and home births.

A reader from Worcester read *Migrations* by Charlotte McConaghy: A frozen setting on a ship sailing to Antarctica to follow the last migrating Arctic terns. A beautiful meditation on climate change and finding hope within a changing world.

A reader from Salem read *Migrations* by Charlotte McConaghy: Crying. Weeping. Sobbing. A slow start that builds layer by layer into an exhilarating story of climate crisis, hope, grief, loss, and reckoning with one's past.

A reader from Malden read *Mind of Winter* by Laura Kasischke: Slow burn but definitely creepy. I had theories on the ending but I was proved wrong. One long chapter and one long day... kept me turning the pages for sure. And beautifully written.

A reader from Cambridge read *Misery* by Stephen King: Winter (and the end of winter) are a big part of the story as the main character feels as though he won't be found / saved from his captor.

A reader from Raynham read *Misery* by Stephen King: A psychological thriller that happens in the winter that documents the outcomes the effect of obsessive behavior.

A reader from Needham Heights read *Miss Winter in the Library with a Knife* by Martin Edwards: Snowed in British murder mystery! This would be a good book if you like Thursday Murder Club and want something festive.

A reader from Waltham read *Mistletoe and Magic* by Helene Sula: Full of humor and appreciation for Yorkshire, England through the eyes of an American. It tells a tale of a quaint village full of charm and quirky characters and characteristics, and of a village and main characters trying to honor (not stay stuck in) the past, while having the courage to truly live in the present and future. It is categorized as Cosy (romance) fiction.

A reader from Shutesbury read *Moon of Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice: This book tells the story of an Anishinaabe community navigating winter after losing power and communication with the outside world.

A reader from Holyoke read *Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice: This was a fantastic read (if a bit creepy to read in the middle of a blizzard). Usually I'm annoyed by a lack of detail, but the author did a great job of really fleshing out the characters and the immediate world of the book, while leaving tantalizingly vague exactly what's happening in

the wider world. Very realistic for the lack of information if all the communications actually went down. I'm definitely going to pick up the next in the series.

A reader from Brighton read *Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice: I loved this book! It was a slow progression which I really liked, and even when the action came, Rice didn't rush it and took his time which I always enjoy. It was very fitting for a book set in winter to have (and keep) that slower pace that you always feel through the winter season. As the book neared the end, I could definitely tell the climax was going to be intense, but wow I was not prepared for that! Very nicely done! I also thoroughly enjoyed that even though the setting was post-apocalyptic, the sentiment and meaning holds true (and powerful) today. Would read again :)

A reader from Billerica read *Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice: I read this entire book over the course of one cold winter night with the memory of 2020 in my head. Spot on in human psychology. Quiet determination and dignity against struggle and dread. Keenly intense. This story will stay with me for a long time flickering into my nightmares.

A reader from Thorndike read *Murder at Holly House* by Denzil Meyrick: Got this at the Barnes and Noble \$5 section but didn't read for Christmas.. Definitely more wintery than holiday themed! Not my favorite but still a good read

A reader from South Easton read *Murder at Holly House* by Denzil Meyrick: I thought this was going to be a cozy who dunnit set at Christmas time. While it is set in the winter and there are references to Christmas, it is not Christmas-themed, nor is it a cozy who dunnit. There is humor in it, though it is less "whimsical" (as far as murder mysteries go) than I was expecting. Though it is different than I expected, I did still enjoy it for the most part.

A reader from Needham read *Murder at Holly House* by Denzil Meyrick: What I thought would be a cozy British murder mystery quickly turned into a spy novel, which was fun but not my cup of tea. But the narrative voice was engaging and kept me reading!

A reader from Carver read *Murder in the Calais Coach* by Agatha Christie: This Agatha Christie murder mystery, *Murder in the Calais Coach* (aka *Murder on the Orient Express*), takes place during a winter crossing in Europe. The train plows into a gigantic snowdrift and is stuck until a team arrives to dig them out. In the meantime one of the passengers in the crowded Calais coach is murdered. On this stretch of track no policemen are present on the train, but one of the directors of the train line is. He asks Hercule Poirot to investigate. Poirot uncovers all the secrets that the passengers are keeping while he searches for the identity of the killer.

A reader from Cheshire read *Murder On Skis* by Phil Bayly: Great read. Unexpected twists and turns.

A reader from Spencer read *Murder on the Christmas Express* by Alexandra Benedict: A decent read, I enjoyed the characters, the story wasn't completely predictable. Not as light and fluffy as the title makes it appear.

A reader from Haverhill read *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie: *Murder on the Orient Express* is a truly amazing mystery book and a pillar in the genre.

A reader from Springfield read *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie: Wonderful locked door mystery and I could read over and over again.

A reader from North Grafton read *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie: For my first book of the year (a book about or set in winter), I decided to read *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie. I've been meaning to read it for years, and I finally got around to it now. I can see why it is one of the most famous mystery novels of all time. I was thoroughly entertained, even though I already knew some of the plot points beforehand. I give this book five out of five stars.

A reader from Cambridge read *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie: This was the perfect book to finish on a snow day!

A reader from Easthampton read *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie: The Orient Express (a train that is unseasonably full) gets stopped in a snow bank. A moody, aggressive, passenger gets murdered and it is up to Inspector Hercule Poirot to figure out who did it. I can't say anything else without spoiling the entire thing.

A reader from Worcester read *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie: Love Hercule Poirot, always kept me on the edge of my seat.

A reader from Rochester read *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie: My first Agatha Christie novel and I understand now why she is so loved. It was a very compelling story, so well written, with twists and turns. I read it while listening to the sounds of a winter storm to really feel like I was there in the train with them.

A reader from Amherst read *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie: I've been meaning to read this book for ages and this challenge pushed me to do it! I loved the character development and the way the clues were uncovered!

A reader from South Hadley read *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie: Great plot twist. It's a classic I've never read before.

A reader from West Wareham read *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie: What I found to be quite interesting is that throughout the novel, M. Poirot felt that the killer had to be a woman, or a man disguising the killing as a woman, because the victim was stabbed

over a dozen times. Such an act could only be done by a woman because of the emotionally irrationality of it all. I can't be the only person who was a little taken aback by such rationale. Perhaps it was common to think this way during the time period in which it was written.

A reader from HOPKINTON read *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie: A classic!

A reader from Lowell read *Murder She Wrote-The Murder of Twelve* by Jessica Fletcher and Jon Land: Murder, betrayal, family drama and suspense- this book has it all! Jessica is staying at a local hotel while her home is being renovated. A snowstorm for the ages is bearing down on Cabot Cove when Jessica and Sheriff Metzger are called out to the old industrial area of town where a deputy found a body in a vehicle. This begins a series of murders, disappearances and attempted murders. All the while, the snow is piling up outside the hotel, preventing anyone from leaving-or coming to help. The snowstorm itself is an integral element to the story and provides a sense of suspense and contributes to the doom the characters feel, including Jessica. I had a great time trying to figure out the identity of the murderer and how the crimes were committed undetected. There are some good twists that I didn't expect but brought the storyline full circle. A great read for a snowy night!

A reader from Monson read *My Beloved* by Jan Karon: Another great book in her series. This one taking place at Christmas with a unique way of getting updates on all of the characters in her series.

A reader from Wakefield read *My Darling Girl* by Jennifer McMahon: *My Darling Girl* is a fast-paced thriller set during winter, which made it feel especially eerie when read around Christmastime. There were several moments that were so creepy, they caused a visceral reaction. The story moves quickly and is easy to get through. However, I didn't love the plot twists, particularly when the story veered into the supernatural.

A reader from Salem read *My Dress-Up Darling Volume 14* by Shinichi Fukuda: This is the volume of this series that the main characters finally confess their love for each other, so this was a very fun and rewarding read! It takes place in the winter in Japan, but the warm relationship between the leads sure kept the cold at bay!

A reader from Waltham read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: This is a great thriller and page turner that you can't put down. You will NOT guess the twist.

A reader from Amesbury read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: Loved it! I thought I figured it out but it kept me guessing until the end.

A reader from Lee read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: I find it difficult to finish many books but not this one. I couldn't predict what was happening and wanted to keep reading to find out what was going to happen next.

A reader from Cambridge read *Never Lie* by Frieda McFadden: Okayyyy this Frida got me. I'm not a huge thriller girl. I love them but they don't speak to my soul and live in my mind. But for a thriller this kept me hooked. I felt like there were so many intricate elements to the plot that kept you on your toes. Just when you think you've figured it out there's a whole new surprise.

A reader from Eastlongmeadow read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: An exciting book to start the year! A Freida book will always get me out of a book slump.

A reader from Abington read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: This January recommendation was AMAZING. I thought I was so smart and knew the answers to this mystery through almost the entire book, then that ending came and I was shocked! If you love a good mystery, *Never Lie* is a must read.

A reader from Billerica read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: I was so certain that I knew the twist and was completely wrong. A quick read but still exciting.

A reader from Rindge read *Never Lie* by Frieda McFadden: McFadden has your interest in this book from the moment you pick it up. Her style has you guessing throughout the book and you always expect the unexpected. The setting of this book takes place in a house that was owned by a now deceased psychiatrist. There are two newlyweds that are interested in purchasing the home. They end up being stranded in the home during a snowstorm. The events that follow are riveting and it is a page turner.

A reader from New Salem read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: *Never Lie* is a fast-paced psychological thriller that kept me hooked from the very beginning. Freida McFadden does an excellent job of creating an eerie, unsettling atmosphere and steadily building tension with short chapters and well-timed twists. The story is easy to follow while still maintaining suspense, making it hard to put the book down once it gets going. I especially enjoyed how the author reveals information in layers, encouraging the reader to constantly question what is true and who can be trusted. The pacing is strong throughout, and the ending leaves room for reflection and lingering questions that stay with you after finishing the book.

A reader from Foxborough read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: I loved the dual perspective and never expected the twists, although I thought I had it all figured out. A real page-turner!

A reader from Dartmouth read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: I found this to be a quick read that kept me interested. It was not what I expected!

A reader from North Andover read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: Lots of twists and unexpected turns!

A reader from Lakeville read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: This book drew me in right away. There were several little hints where something seemed “off” with a character or situation. I thought I had the story figured out early on- I was wrong! It’s a fun, quick read that will keep you guessing until the end!

A reader from Foxboro read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: A newly married couple go to check out a house for sale and the realtor does not arrive before the snow begins. The storm intensifies, their car is stuck in the snow, and they find a way to break into the house to escape the storm. The story unfolds from several points of view leading to an expected ending.

A reader from Lowell read *Never Lie* by Frieda McFadden: It was a good book. This is actually the first one that I have read by this popular author. It made me want to read some others that she has written.

A reader from Peabody read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: I thought I had the plot twist figured out on this one, but Freida had me fooled. As always, it was very intriguing and a quick read. The characters were meh and the beginning of the book wasn't really consistent with the end, but I guess the theme of lying plays into the story there.

A reader from Beverly read *never lie* by freida mcfadden: my first freida mcfadden and i was not disappointed! really great book to listen to while crafting :)

A reader from North Reading read *Never Lie* by Frieda McFadden: In typical Frieda McFadden fashion, you think you know where this book is headed but in fact it goes in a completely different direction. It was an enjoyable read.

A reader from North Brookfield read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: This book was so awesome, I loved the pace of the story and I read it in three days. It's an interesting thriller and was definitely a page turner. I have read three additional books by this author. Thank you for helping me discover my new favorite author!!!

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: I thought I had figured out the twist about halfway through, but I was totally wrong! This one definitely kept me guessing, and had a great locked room winter mystery vibe.

A reader from Fitchburg read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: A twisty and fast-paced read - perfect for a snow day.

A reader from Norwood read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: I will be very honest when I first started this book I thought I knew where it was going, so I was becoming a little disappointed that the ending was so predictable. However, I was very shocked at the end that I was wrong! This was a super fast, easy read. I finished in 2 days.

A reader from Barre read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: First thought after completion is man, sick and twisted main characters. This book started quite predictable, or so I thought, but had some good twists and didn't end as I had anticipated it would. The plot was entertaining enough though not complex or deep. I did not connect or really care for any of the characters except Luke. And really, who puts up a giant portrait of themselves in a house they live in, alone?! Weird.

A reader from Somerville read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: Fun, silly thriller. Three stars.

A reader from Ashburnham read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: Sadly I've been in a book slump and needed something quick and easy to join in on this reading challenge. A decent plot twist.

A reader from Brookline read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: Couple snowed in at a giant house with many secrets!

A reader from Quincy read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: This was a great book to start the challenge. I found it enjoyable and easy to get into. The setting is great because I am in Massachusetts and it is cold and snowy at the moment. It was great to see the character development. I will be reading other books by this author in the future.

A reader from Franklin read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: One of my favorites of Freida McFadden's! I liked the layout of the book with the different audio transcripts of sessions intermixed amongst the chapters of the story. Rated 4/5 on Goodreads.

A reader from Swampscott read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: The book took a turn that I definitely didn't expect. I thought there was a huge plot hole based on the direction that the book took.

A reader from Sidney read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: I admit I was pleasantly surprised by some of the end revelations. I didn't enjoy any of the characters, though, which made the read less enjoyable for me. This was my first Freida McFadden but I would try another.

A reader from Longmeadow read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: Freida got me again! I didn't see the twist coming, but I don't ever seem to. I enjoyed reading this story,

particularly because I was snowed in while they were snowed in so it was life imitating art in a sense. I didn't necessarily love that the bad guys got away... but I still liked the story overall.

A reader from Cambridge read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: I read this book the weekend of the big snowstorm, and it was extremely fitting! I can't lie, I did not fully guess the different twist in the book. As a therapist, I will NEVER be operating a private practice so close to home.

A reader from Randolph read *Never Lie* by Freida McFadden: A book that is set in a house set off the beaten path. A possible dream home, a young couple, a snow storm, no phone service...and unusual happenings. A good read with twists and turns.

A reader from Marshfield read *Night Film* by Marisha Pessl: Part of the book is set in the winter and the main character has to survive freezing temperatures, frozen lakes, and avoid hypothermia.

A reader from Greenfield read *Njuta* by Niki Brantmark: Ever since reading *The Swedish Art of Death Cleaning* I have become very interested in all things having to do with Sweden. *Njuta* means enjoy, delight in and is a book about the Swedish culture and lifestyle. A part of the book discusses adapting to the seasons, one of which is their extended winter. I definitely recommend this book, esp if you enjoy mindfulness or travel, or interest in Nordic countries.

A reader from Bellingham read *No Exit* by Taylor Adams: This book was easily a 5 star book and was a quick read but full of suspense. I was on edge for half the book. It follows the main character Darby as she sets out to visit her sick Mother. While on the road she gets trapped in a snowstorm at a random pit stop with a handful of other travelers. While there she believes that she saw a child's hand in the back of someone's vehicle. She now needs to figure out what her next step will be because if it is a child, the person who took that child is someone at the pit stop with her.

A reader from Somerville read *No Exit* by Taylor Adams: A thriller set at a remote highway rest stop during a snowstorm. The story follows Darby Thorne, a college student who becomes stranded overnight with a small group of strangers when the roads close. As the night goes on, Darby realizes there's a serious problem that can't be ignored.

A reader from salem read *No Exit* by Taylor Adams: In the middle of a blizzard and stranded at a rest stop. Can Darby save the little girl?

A reader from North Easton read *No Exit* by Taylor Adams: Very tense thriller with lots of surprises. I had to put it down a few times because I was getting scared. The setting is a

lonely highway rest stop/visitors center in the middle of a bad snowstorm. And while my logical mind side-eyed some of the story line, I enjoyed it enough to read the entire book in two days.

A reader from Georgetown read *No Exit* by Taylor Adams: This was a great book! It's about a girl coming home from college for winter break and, while on her way home, has to stay at a rest stop overnight due to a large blizzard. At the rest stop, however, she notices a child held captive inside a van in the parking lot, so she has to figure out who at the rest stop is responsible and why, and who she can trust to help her do something about it. The book gets better as the story goes on, with a lot of twists and turns and moments that make you really despise the antagonists and question whether the main character will succeed. I highly recommend this book for anyone who likes thrillers.

A reader from Vineyard Haven read *No Exit* by Taylor Adams: This was a very exciting read; I was able to complete it within a day. I was expecting more of a mystery with the plot, but when I realized what the author was going for I enjoyed it quite a lot.

A reader from Lowell read *No Man's Land* by Szymon Kudranski: This is an amazing murder/crime thriller. It's 3 issues of a comic series combined into one graphic novel set during the Cold War on the Ice Curtain between the USSR and Alaska. An FBI and KGB agent have to work together to solve a murder and prevent the Cold War from turning into the next world war. The story and artwork are incredible.

A reader from Worcester read *Norse Gods* by Neil Gaiman: This is a retelling of some of the prominent Norse myths, featuring Gods such as Odin, Freya, and Thor. Many of the legends are set in winter and/or lands of ice/snow.

A reader from Milford read *North is the Night* by Emily Rath: Finnish folklore, adventure in winter.

A reader from Greenfield read *Northeaster* by Cathie Pelletier: When I wasn't reading this book, I was thinking about it! A perfect blend of New England history, human interest and suspense! You will learn to love and worry about some of the families and animals that endured the blizzard of 1952. Set in New Hampshire and Maine, there are many familiar places mentioned. This was an entertaining and fun read.

A reader from Hopedale read *Northeaster* by Cathie Pelletier: Loved this book made up of various experiences of blizzard in Maine 1952!

A reader from Northfield read *Northernmost* by Peter Geye: I was definitely in the mood for a family saga, have come to like switching time periods and felt completely justified huddling up under layers with a hot cup of tea during this frigid month (for real) to read this

story set in frozen landscapes. After I realized that Peter Geye was born and raised in Minneapolis, I was even more grateful to have picked this book for this month in these times of heart wrenching bleakness and heart empowering courage. Kismet.

A reader from North Attleboro read *NOS4A2* by Joe Hill: I wasn't sure if I was going to enjoy this book but I really did. My only "issue" is that it read too much like a Stephen King novel which kinda makes sense since that's his dad.

A reader from Sudbury read *Off Season: Discovering America on Winter's Shore* by Ken McAlpine: Great book in which the author travels the length of Rt 1 along the Eastern seaboard, experiencing winter in otherwise summer/vacation communities. The stories and people he collects along the way are fascinating and in many cases touching. A very different way to "winter."

A reader from Rockland read *Once There Were Wolves* by Charlotte McConaghy: A strange but super interesting read. I found it a bit implausible at times but enjoyed reading it, nonetheless. I recommend it!

A reader from Winchendon read *Once Upon a River* by Diane Setterfield: On a winter's night, a wounded man brings a drowned girl to an inn, where she revives, but she cannot speak, and her identity is unknown. The narrative follows the claims of three families and the townspeople drawn to the mystery, all while exploring the river's role as a powerful, life-giving, and life-taking force.

A reader from Salem read *Once Upon A River* by Diane Setterfield: This story brings a lot to the table and was unexpected in many ways. I enjoyed the weaving in of well known fairy tales, the descriptiveness of the small town life, and how well the author developed the characters. Very pleased with how this month's prompt connected me to this book!

A reader from Middleton read *One Big Happy Family* by Mallery Susan: Julie Parker was looking forward to a nice quiet Christmas but her family had different plans.

A reader from SOUTH HADLEY read *One By One* by Ruth Ware: I was pleasantly surprised by how much I enjoyed this book. I liked it better than her other popular book. I definitely recommend it.

A reader from Stoughton read *One By One* by Ruth Ware: *One By One* by Ruth Ware is a mystery thriller about a corporate retreat group trapped in a French ski chalet by a winter storm and avalanche. The story is told by alternating narrators, and the characters' stories are slowly revealed as victims pile up faster than the snow outside. The intense winter setting/ locked room type mystery was familiar. I was compelled to read it quickly to finish

the story, and I can see why many of Ruth Ware's fans would speak highly of it but *One By One* wasn't a book I'm that enthusiastic about.

A reader from Rockland read *One By One* by Ruth Ware: A work retreat goes awry in a thrilling and terrifying fashion! Tensions are already high when a group of coworkers arrive at a remote resort for week of skiing and negotiations, but things take a turn for the worse when a blizzard and a catastrophic avalanche leave the group cut off from the nearby town. Terror sets in as they find out a coworker may have been lost in the avalanche, and spirits don't improve as they realize someone in their group may have had a hand in her disappearance. This was an exciting read that had me simultaneously rooting for characters while also questioning their innocence. The double narrators add to the unease as you quickly shift perspective and follow along as each one fills in the blanks of the story.

A reader from Charlton read *one by one* by Ruth Ware: Author Ruth Ware weaves a thrilling tail of mystery set in the Alps at a ski chalet. I enjoyed how she told the story from different character's perspectives. I was on the edge of my seat with anticipation through to the end.

A reader from Quincy read *One By One* by Ruth Ware: Great atmosphere for January, but thought it was a bit slow in parts and also a bit anticlimactic at the very end.

A reader from Northampton read *One by One* by Ruth Ware: Tech company gathering at a resort in the French Alps. An avalanche cuts access to the outside world. Tensions are high due to possible buyout and members are dying One by One. An engaging murder mystery .

A reader from Queensbury read *One by One* by Ruth Ware: I enjoyed this book, but I did not think that it was as good as some of the author's other books.

A reader from Westford read *One By One* by Ruth Ware: It was set in the French Alps during the winter/ski season. An avalanche, a group of employees working for an app company called Snoop, and a cozy (at the beginning) chalet are the setting for a who-done-it that keeps you guessing until the end.

A reader from Brookline read *One Day in December* by Josie Silver: I loved the book, *One Day in December* because it kept me guessing until the end of what will happen between the two characters, Laurie & Jack. There was so many twists and turns!!

A reader from Worcester read *One Day in December* by Josie Silver: An interesting book about the pain, heartache, and trouble that comes with coming of age. A bit of a painful read, and I can't honestly say I liked most of the characters by the end, but they did feel pretty real, so there's that!

A reader from Burlington read *One Day in December* by Josie Silver: I loved this book!! I read it while home sick with the flu and it was a much needed escape.

A reader from Boston read *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn: You can't complain about Boston winters when reading about Soviet labor camp winters.

A reader from Greenfield read *One Jump At A Time* by Nathan Chen: This being a Winter Olympics year and with figure skating being my favorite sport to watch i chose this memoir by three-time World Champion and 2022 Olympic gold medalist in Beijing, Nathan Chen. I prefer nonfiction. This was also an audiobook. I enjoyed this selection.

A reader from Lynn read *Orient Express* by Graham Greene: I was so surprised to find out that there was *another* book besides Agatha Christie's famous title that also takes place on the Orient Express in winter, published a few years before...this one is definitely grittier and darker, but moody and atmospheric, and perfect for winter.

A reader from Melrose read *Os Noivos do Inverno/A Winter's Promise* by Christelle Dabos: I wasn't sure I'd finish this in time for the end of the month, but I made it. This is a fun book, as long as you don't take it too seriously. The magic and the drama pulls you in.

A reader from Boston read *Over and Under the Snow* by Kate Messner: I learned so much about how animals (and some insects) live during the cold winter months!

A reader from Norwood read *Owls of the Eastern Ice* by Jonathan C. Slaughter: Interesting book about field research of the elusive fish owl in Russia. They're easiest to find in winter, which adds to the challenge.

A reader from Plymouth read *Peace Like a River* by Leif Enger: A very readable mix of family drama, mystery, and nature writing. I loved the atmosphere of the Dakotas in the winter.

A reader from Northampton read *Peace Like a River* by Leif Enger: Minnesota in winter! This book is really enjoyable, a character study of people I really cared about and was rooting for. A touch of the magical to keep it interesting. Lots of snow and trees and water. Lots of hardship. Very beautiful meditation on family, faith, love, belief, accountability.

A reader from Mansfield read *Peking Duck and Cover* by Vivian Chien: Another great cozy mystery read. Set during the Chinese/Lunar New Year during the cold winter month of February for the main character and her family and friends. The celebration doesn't go as planned, but everything always works out in the end.

A reader from East Falmouth read *Power Failure A nurse's story* by Terri Arthur: An interesting story set on Cape Cod, MA during the snowstorm Nemo in Feb 2013. It is about nurses trying to keep patients alive at a shelter during the storm with lack of proper equipment, food and a generator that wouldn't stay on.

A reader from Ludlow read *Pretty Girls* by Karin Slaughter: A psychological thriller for its dark, twisty, and emotional depth. It's showing multiple view points exploring how a crime affects everyone involved. This is not a cozy thriller. It's disturbing, intense, and emotionally heavy—but if you can handle dark subject matter, it's gripping and unforgettable.

A reader from Mansfield read *Project Hail Mary* by Andy Weir: LOVED! I rated it 4.25/5 stars. I truly felt like I was in space on this mission with the main character.

A reader from Readville read *Quicksilver* by Callie Hart: I wanted to wait until *Brimstone* came out to read this, thinking it was a duology. I honestly enjoyed it, and am looking forward to the second one. The snark was delightful, the characters were engaging, and despite some of the usual tropes it was still a fun read.

A reader from North Andover read *Radar Girls* by Sara Ackerman: I loved learning about the radar stations and technology as people were first figuring it out. This book was interesting because although "winter" weather was described throughout the book, the story was set in Hawaii, so it meant rainy and cold enough to require long sleeves.

A reader from Foxborough read *Raising Hare* by Chloe Dalton: A quiet, gentle book about slowing down and noticing nature and the seasons. A book about finding a day old hare and raising it.

A reader from North Dighton read *Raven Black* by Ann Cleeves: A great winter mystery! Can't wait to read more of this series!

A reader from Salem read *Requiem For A Mouse* by Miranda James: Such a cute, cozy mystery! With cats! Doesn't get much better.

A reader from Greenfield read *Rise* by Lindsey Vonn: I liked the book and found her narrative about her life and career very interesting.

A reader from Melrose read *Rock Paper Scissors* by Alice Feeney: Love the slow burn of the story. The ending made me want to go back and read it all again having the knowledge of the first read!

A reader from West Brookfield read *Rock Paper Scissors* by Alice Feeney: I absolutely LOVED this book! There were some great twists, I didn't want to put it down. I was very excited to see it may get turned into a series and I can enjoy it all over again

A reader from fitchburg read *Rock Paper Scissors* by Alice Feeney: A getaway for a struggling couple in a remote Scottish chapel. A snowstorm. What else can go wrong? Alice Feeney doesn't disappoint with plot twists that turn everything on end.

A reader from Woburn read *Rock Paper Scissors* by Alice Feeney: Glad I got to read this book, as it's been on my TBR for a while now! The setting definitely contributed to an eerie, spooky vibe, and many twists and unreliable characters that I didn't see coming. 3.5/5

A reader from lee read *Rock Paper Scissors* by Alice Feeney: I enjoyed this book. I was hooked early on and couldn't wait to finish it. The twist was not what I thought, but I liked it.

A reader from Amherst read *Rock Paper Scissors* by Alice Feeney: I loved this thriller! It was such a fast-paced page turner & the twists were crazy. I am struggling to fully wrap my head around the complicated characters and their relationships, but I 10/10 recommend!

A reader from Newport read *Role Model* by Rachel Reid: Thanks to the release of the show, *Heated Rivalry*, I'm doing a reread of the book series. *Role Model* follows another NHL superstar, Troy Barrett. He is newly traded to the Ottawa Centaurs after a public argument with his former best friend and teammate, who Troy believes to be guilty of accusations that are coming out about him. Troy's story is about learning to live more authentically and making amends for his past behavior while on the Toronto Guardians.

A reader from Mansfield read *Role Model* by Rachel Reid: This was a very cute and fun book! Good character development and lots of dogs.

A reader from Longmeadow read *RUMORS OF SPRING* by farah bashir: This isn't a fictional book rather a deeply personal reflection by the author set in War torn Kashmir and in a very cold climate. The book is framed around the death of Bashir's beloved grandmother, using that day as a kind of anchor point. From there, the narrative moves through flashbacks and reflections that show how ordinary life school, family routines, friendships, small pleasures- coexisted with fear, instability, and loss.

A reader from Dracut read *Run* by Ann Patchett: Loved this book and the way all the characters' lives were interwoven!

A reader from Arlington read *Run* by Ann Patchett: Good story with great reference and description of local areas (Boston, Cambridge). I thought her characters were vivid and easy to picture.

A reader from Cheshire read *Run* by Ann Patchett: Fun to read novel set in familiar city and relatable climate.

A reader from Oxford read *Run* by Ann Patchett: LOVED this book! Read it in less than two days and am recommending it to all my friends.

A reader from Amherst read *Run* by Ann Patchett: Very enjoyable. Have never found an Ann Patchett book I didn't like.

A reader from Andover read *Run* by Ann Patchett: This novel takes place in the winter and in Boston. Readers familiar with Boston will especially like this book, since there are many references to the train, neighborhoods, and landmarks. The dad, Doyle is a previous mayor of Boston. He and his wife, Bernadette, have a son Sullivan, then adopt 2 black brothers, who are a year apart. After attending a political lecture, an unknown woman pushes one of the boys out of the way of an oncoming car. Who is this woman and her daughter? Who are the runners and why do they run? Details unravel and mystery lurks in this Bostonian winter novel. I highly recommend it.

A reader from Plainville read *Run* by Ann Patchett: This has been on my TBR shelf for awhile. This month's challenge was the perfect opportunity to finally read it. I definitely felt like I was immersed in the scenes, as it was snowing and cold as I read this. The story itself was just OK for me.

A reader from Seekonk read *Run* by Ann Patchett: Patchett is a master story teller in beautiful prose. This book tells a tension field story as the bulk of the story is happening in a 24 hour window. If you have not read Patchett, do! If you have but not this book run (pun intended) don't walk to your nearest library.

A reader from West Boylston read *Run* by Ann Patchett: Set over 24 hours, this book tells the story of two families colliding in a snow storm and their life changing interactions. It explores heart ache, loss, and family belonging (blood relation vs choice). It was so good I finished it within 24 hours of picking it up.

A reader from Wellesley read *Run* by Ann Patchett: As a backdrop, Boston in the early 2000s contextualizes and lends credibility to Ann Patchett's *Run*: a Boston politician from an Irish family whose political career shrivels because of lies about a car accident; an inter-racial family living in a city with a history of racism; the choices that face wealthy and poor families who live blocks apart but whose options diverge despite the shared neighborhood. The Boston setting fills in the gaps for characters like Brennan Doyle and his adopted sons, Tip and Teddy. Brennan is a politician who loves politics but is defeated in that quest by family conduct. Sullivan, the 'black sheep' in the family, was responsible for the death of a female friend in a car accident that his father helped to cover up. Sound familiar? Patchett references other Boston tropes including the academic whiz who goes to Harvard to hide himself in the pursuit of scientific knowledge and the son with deep faith who finds comfort in the Church. This is early 2000s before the scandals, although I found it difficult to read the scenes between Teddy and his uncle without a layer of cynicism that I doubt Patchett intended. I enjoyed *Run*, but it feels like a cheat to create characters whose complexities are not fully developed by exist by allusion to truths about the setting. If Boston provides context for the characters in *Run*, then snow is the invisible force that brings them together

then reveals their secrets. Snow falling on a slippery road causes the collision, literal and metaphorical, that brings Kenya into the Doyles' orbit. A snow storm keeps them together overnight allowing for the conversations that reveal the characters to each other, and to some extent, to themselves. Tip's fall on icy snow results in a hospital visit that brings everyone together. Snow is a convenient plot point for advancing the characters' growth in understanding of themselves and their relationship to each other. While I enjoyed *Run* and appreciate the connections between the setting, the plot techniques advanced by the use of snow, I wished that the characters had been more fully developed, more unique, and less reliant on reader associations to enliven the characters.

A reader from Sudbury read *Run* by Ann Patchett: It took place in winter, so it fulfills the assignment.

A reader from Norton read *Run* by Ann Patchett: Winter serves as the backdrop to this novel. I really enjoyed reading one of Ann Patchett's earlier novels (published in 2007). This is a character-driven story which involves the depiction of several different families bound together by strong maternal figures.

A reader from West Springfield read *Run* by Ann Patchett: Intriguing story on what defines family and the sacrifices we make to protect others. I liked the storyline happening in one day.

A reader from Foxboro read *Run* by Ann Patchett: The story was a little drawn out. The ending feels too neatly resolved, without a convincing explanation of how the characters processed the trauma or learned to live with one another afterward.

A reader from Medford read *Run* by Ann Patchett: I'd read other work by Ann Patchett before, but this book was new to me. It left me thinking about what it means to be a family and the hard choices we often have to make because of life circumstances. Loved the Boston tie-ins as well.

A reader from Weymouth read *Run* by Ann Patchett: Really nice story beautifully told. Ann Patchett is a genius with words - everything she writes feels so natural and clean. Great story well told. Time to read *Bel Canto*.

A reader from Lancaster read *Run* by Anne Patchett: I read and listened to this book. Most of the story took place in Boston during a snow storm. The would be a great book for a book group to discuss. I am curious to hear what others thought of the book. I would also like to try another book by this author.

A reader from Florence read *Run* by Ann Patchett: A former Boston mayor, Doyle, sees his family and his worldview upended when a skidding car in a Harvard Square snowstorm

hospitalizes his son Tip and a stranger. Tip and his close brother Teddy are college age African Americans whom Doyle and his wife adopted and gave every educational advantage as part of a good Catholic upbringing. The injured woman, Tennessee, and her young daughter Kenya are black too, but live in poverty. The questions of race, class, and responsibility to our neighbors emerge as part of a suspenseful plot. This is a well written story that I could have read all in one sitting, had I had the time. I enjoyed the Boston setting, although the political scene has changed enough that this 2007 book reads a bit dated. Tip's passion for the ichthyology collection (preserved fish) at Harvard made for an original and interesting subplot. I did feel the way the interracial adoption played out with no apparent impact on any of the DoYLES was unrealistic, and the smart and super athletic Kenya (a track star, of course) was, while lovingly portrayed, maybe too good to be true. Otherwise a great read.

A reader from ARLINGTON read *Run* by Ann Patchett: The story is set in Harvard Square and Boston. In a blinding snowstorm, a young man argues with his father, steps off the curb into the path of an oncoming car, and is pushed aside by a woman whom he doesn't know, but is well-known by the woman. The book centers on family relationships, parental expectations, and the advantages of privilege.

A reader from Portsmouth read *Run* by Ann Patchett: 3/5

A reader from Hudson read *Run* by Ann Patchett: The story is about families, and primarily involves a father; his three sons, two adopted; the mother of the two adopted boys; and the adopted daughter she has raised. The two adopted boys and their sister and mother are brought together through an automobile accident during a snowstorm and the book details the next day of their lives. I found the characters well drawn but the plot somewhat contrived. The winter scenes are effectively done, with memorable descriptions of slippery ice, snow, and frigid temperatures.

A reader from East Longmeadow read *Run* by Ann Patchett: Boy was that hard! Takes place in Boston. Has to do with an injury and meeting extended family.

A reader from Uxbridge read *Russian Winter* by Daphne Kalotay: Very engrossing story, but it did jump narratives a lot and time periods.

A reader from Bedford read *Sabriel* by Garth Nix: I love the magic system, and the book is set in winter in the Old Kingdom. Definitely creepy undead though!

A reader from Boston read *Saltcrop* by Yume Kitasei: A powerful book about family and sisterhood!

A reader from Basking Ridge read *Santa Bruce* by Ryan Higgins: I LOVE BRUCE.

A reader from BILLERICA read *Say You'll Remember Me* by Abby Jimenez: Some chapters are set in Minnesota in Winter.

A reader from Somerville read *Season of the Witch* by Sophie H. Morgan: A leftover from my holiday romance pile to finish up! Two witchy families recently merged their potion making businesses, but to secure one investor, the family heirs must pretend to be in love while spending the holidays at a mansion in England. Very cozy vibes.

A reader from Freetown read *Septology* by Jon Fosse: A unique narrative of doppelgangers both named Asle, which shifts from one to other subtly and without warning. Set in Norway in winter (it seems to be always snowing). One main character is a painter and the other an alcoholic down on his luck. Ales, the deceased wife of Asel the painter, is a presence throughout.

A reader from Newton Upper Falls read *Septology* by Jon Fosse: Set over a week's time preceding Christmas, Jon Fosse's seven-volume novel is simultaneously light on plot while containing a lifetime of memories. The lead character, Asle, a talented artist, meditates on life, art, and religion, while slipping into and out of his past. Fosse is a recent Nobel Prize winner and *Septology* certainly demonstrates why.

A reader from Somerset read *Shepherd's Abiding* by Jan Karon: This book is about the small community of Mitford and its charming inhabitants leading up to Christmas. During the story, Father Tim attempts to rehab a manger set in need of repair. This feel good book will make you smile!

A reader from Worcester read *Sherlock Holmes and the real thing* by Nicholas Meyer: A more interesting breed than the Sherlock Holmes books by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Much better than the authors publishers description. A good mystery read on a cold winter's night.

A reader from Northfield read *Shiver* by Allie Reynolds: A debut thriller novel set in the French Alps at a ski resort that is empty, except for 5 snowboarding friends that were invited for the weekend for a 10 year reunion. Someone steals their cellphones, then the mountain resort loses electricity, heat, and no phones are available. Individuals start to disappear. The book is repetitive with little character development. The book is geared for young adults. I did not care for the novel, but I do not care for thrillers either.

A reader from Ludlow read *Silver* by Josie: Winter in New York shows that family loyalty is important, even when it is hard to understand or accept the truth. The characters learn new information about their family that changes how they view each other. Finding out these secrets is sometimes confusing, but it helps them grow and become stronger. The book

teaches that learning about your family can be difficult, but it can also bring people closer together.

A reader from Beverly read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: What a powerful little book. A lot of our lives are built around doing the same thing; day after day. And then there are moments when you can put yourself out there, to step out of the routine, and do something for someone else.

A reader from Newton read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: Beautifully written; more like a short story than a novel. Tight prose; uses 1 word where others would use 5.

A reader from Medford read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: Set in Ireland around Christmastime, this novella focuses on Bill Furlong as he uncovers new information about his community, their values, and perhaps even his own background. While the subject matter is quite dark, this book informed me about mistreatment of women that I was previously unaware.

A reader from Milford read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: difficult subject material beautifully and thoughtfully presented.

A reader from Somerville read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: You could read this at any time, but winter is the best season for this short book set in the week leading up to Christmas. The themes are timeless though, as one man wrestles with his conscience and sense of responsibility towards someone in his community. As a bonus, I also read *Winter: The Story of a Season* by Val McDermid, a lovely meditation on the season, interspersed with childhood memories. The audio version, narrated by the author, was fantastic.

A reader from Greenfield read *Small things like these* by Claire Keegan: This was short, but really powerful look at a part of Irish history I didn't know much about. Also, listened to the audiobook while shoveling which really added to the frigid ambience.

A reader from Boston read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: A short, beautiful story on doing what's right to care for others when discovering an injustice. This book is fiction but sheds light on a historical injustice.

A reader from Medfield read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: This small book packed a punch! This was a great book club book, especially for this time of year.

A reader from Lynn read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: I absolutely loved *Small Things Like These* and *Foster*. She Keegan has an amazing way with words and I appreciate how she seems to write the story just as long as it needs to be. Absolutely perfect. I loved the ending, and the story.

A reader from Saugus read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: Really enjoyed the descriptive narrative.

A reader from Yarmouth read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: A beautiful, melancholy novella about reckoning with one's own past and the awful truths sitting right in front of you.

A reader from Shutesbury read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: Set in 1985 in a small Irish town with the main character a coal merchant and family man who came from nothing. Set in winter in the bleak months of November and December the story shows how one can quietly and simply affect change.

A reader from Waltham read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: I really liked it! I wish it was longer.

A reader from Freetown read *Small things like these* by Claire Keegan: Was not a fan. For such a short book it took me a long time to finish it and seemed to drag on. Would not suggest.

A reader from West Roxbury read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: Beautiful, haunting, spare and lush (as only Irish authors can) story of a slow dawning that things have not been what they seem.

A reader from Ludlow read *Small things like these* by Claire Keegan.

A reader from Mendon read *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan: This was not my favorite book but was easy to read and get through.

A reader from Cambridge read *Smilla's Sense of Snow* by Peter Hoeg: A quirky novel. The story itself is a wild ride that touches on topics like identity, death, the contention between Greenland/Denmark and the science of ice and snow. And it's a mystery! It unfolds through Smilla who reveals herself to the reader in stories she shares about her life and childhood, unflinching observations about herself and the world and through her ferocity in search for truth. A tenacious heroine if there ever was one. The book is well written in a tight spare way which suits Smilla perfectly. It's not exactly an easy read, there is a lot to take in, but the character of Smilla alone makes it worthwhile.

A reader from Mattapoisett read *Smilla's Sense of Snow* by Peter Hoeg: I had tried to read this when it came out but couldn't get into it. This time was different. Smilla, an Inuit-Danish woman, raised on Greenland and living in Denmark, befriends a young boy in her apartment building. When he dies, supposedly by falling off the roof, Smilla refuses to accept this explanation. As she digs deeper, her life is threatened many times and she pisses off many people in her search for truth.

A reader from Brighton read *Smilla's Sense of Snow* by Peter Hoeg: It's a dense read but this was such a good book.

A reader from Peabody read *Snow* by John Banville: I tend to avoid mysteries, since I never find myself gripped in quite the way I want, but it seems like there are a TON of mysteries set in the middle of winter (makes sense, snow covers up tracks and evidence, etc.). Honestly, I feel like just as I was starting to get interested/invested in solving the mystery, the author makes the BAFFLING choice to switch to the point of view of the person responsible, attempting to either build sympathy (yikes) or, one can only hope, horror? It really tipped the mystery from predictable procedural into "Okay let's get this over with" territory for me. If only I had waited one more month to read *Left Hand of Darkness* for the first time! Perfect winter (Winter!) story.

A reader from West Springfield read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: I couldn't put this down. And reading it with two feet of snow outside was perfect.

A reader from Amesbury read *Snow Country* by Yasunari Kawabata: A cool, detached look at love that never fully takes hold.

A reader from Milford read *Snow Country* by Yasunari Kawabata: a beautiful, sad, captivating setting.

A reader from Jamaica Plain read *Snow Country* by Yasunari Kawabata: I've had this as a TBR for years now, and am happy the reading challenge gave me the impetus to read it finally! I was moved by how delicate and almost incomplete everything felt - which I think is part of the point. A beautifully reflective narrative on ephemerality, particularly the transitory nature of relationships, of our feelings, and the roles we find ourselves in when we become entangled in the lives of other people. Would read again!

A reader from East longmeadow read *Snow drift* by Helene Tursten: Well written Nordic Noir. This is part of a series based on a Swedish police detective who accidentally becomes involved in several murders.

A reader from East Longmeadow read *Snow Drowned* by Jennifer D Lyle: I unfortunately didn't like this book very much. The premise sounded interesting, but ultimately the main character didn't have any agency.

A reader from Woburn read *snow drowned* by jennifer d lyle: Had potential but I think fell quite short.

A reader from SOUTH DARTMOUTH read *Snow Falling On Cedars* by David Guterson: Suspense, romance, historical fiction, a glimpse of life in the 50s.

A reader from Jamaica Plain read *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson: I very much enjoyed reading *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson. I chose the book from the suggested list as I hadn't read it when it was published and happened to find it in a little free library when I was trying to decide what to read - serendipity! The book is set on a fictional island in the San Juans of Puget Sound. The sense of place is palpable. The author's descriptions of the weather, landscape and people who populate it bring the area to life for the reader. Although the title includes the word 'snow', interestingly, the events described in the book take place over decades and in all seasons. But, the centerpiece of the book, the trial of a Japanese-American fisherman accused of murder, takes place during an epic snowstorm. The description of the storm is woven into the details of the trial, and lend it a grave, melancholy tone. For example, in this description of the courtroom: "The four tall windows, frosted with vapor from the steam radiators, allowed a gray snowfall light to descend into the courtroom. Its timbre replaced that of the overhead lights and cast a subtle pall across the citizens in the gallery.." In addition to affecting the tone of trial, the storm affects the outcome of the trial in a profound way, as weather can do in real life. I was grateful to have read this book as a part of the reading challenge, for it caused me to focus on the description of the weather and it's impact on the story in a way that I don't believe that I would have otherwise. I found the book particularly timely in its description of racism and xenophobia and their effects on individual characters. I imagine that this is not too different from what many real people are experiencing in the United States today. Just as we must today, characters in the book wrestle with morality and sometimes, when guided by morals and love, manage to overcome the effects of prejudice and fear.

A reader from Wakefield read *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson: While I've read a lot of historical fiction, this was one of my favorites! I loved the brief snippets of stories from the past that gave insight into the characters' lives, motivations, and personalities. The high stakes of the courthouse drama really drove the plot, and the abundance of unreliable narrators was always surprising at every turn. I loved the depth of each major character, and the final line absolutely gave me chills. Would definitely recommend!

A reader from Halifax read *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson: Started slow, but then got into a good pacing. Lots of flashbacks and perspective bouncing, but it worked well. I can see why it is considered a classic.

A reader from Mansfield read *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson: I chose this book on a recommendation, although hesitant to read it and with a slow start I can say that it was a good read. Most WWII or post WWII era books focus on Hitler and the Germans, this focus was on the Japanese-Americans and the prejudice that they encounter. There were no surprises in the book and although slow at times, it was a nice story.

A reader from Corvallis read *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson: I selected *Snow Falling on Cedars* from the suggested January picks list. I remember all of the ads for the movie when it came out, but I had no idea it was primarily about Japanese internment during the war and a murder trial, and not just a romantic story. I enjoyed reading the book, but I think the "romantic" portion of the plot is very outdated now. The white journalist, Ishmael, who falls in love with Hatsue as a kid, reacts to rejection by becoming a bitter misogynist and nearly allows Hatsue's husband Kabuo to go to jail or be executed because his feelings were hurt. Erase all of that, leaving the racially charged murder trial, and it's an excellent book.

A reader from Ludlow read *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson: A perfect book to slowly read over a long snowy weekend!

A reader from Hyannis read *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson: It was set in 1954 on an island in the Puget Sound. It described the life of the people of San Pedro from prior to World War II up to 1954. It was a love story and a murder mystery. It was thoughtful and suspenseful. It gave insight to the long term effects that war and combat had on the men who served their country and those that waited for their return. It showed how culture and racism could separate as well as bring a community together. Once a death occurred a murder investigated, an arrest and a trial started I expected the book to move along more quickly. The excessive (my opinion) descriptions of the storm, landscape and some conversations that made the beginning of the book so likable now were tedious. I wanted to see and hear more about the investigation and especially the trial proceedings. I would recommend it.

A reader from Halifax read *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson: Fantastic story. Draws you in from the very first page. However, there are a lot of flashbacks, which normally are not my cup of tea. However, you get used to it, and the flashbacks are useful in giving you an understanding of the history of the area and its inhabitants.

A reader from Maynard read *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson: I had read this book as a teenager one winter in the 1990's, but had only vague memories of the story. Returning to it now, I was struck by the elegance and sparseness of the writing and the way it evoked every sense so beautifully. Each of the characters in this book - including the island itself - were multi-layered and well-developed. As I neared the end of the book and the suspense built, I found so connected with some of these characters that I had to take a deep breath before reading the last few pages to find out how it would end. My dad used to describe some movies and books as "It should be like that", and this was one of them, both as a well-crafted piece of literature and as an example of people moving past their differences to understand each other and make hard and honest choices.

A reader from Springfield read *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson: My January read was none other than *Snow Falling on Cedars*. I remember watching the film many years ago as a young girl and not understanding it all. I remember being so disappointed as I was very excited to see it. Now that my frontal lobe is fully developed I planned on rewatching it until this challenge was presented to me. I really loved this book. It was suspenseful. Though there were some really slow parts I couldn't put it down. It's a sad but beautiful story of life, love, sacrifice, culture, and change. All wrapped with a bow of beautiful imagery.

A reader from Sidney read *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson: I'm glad I read it, though I did have to skip most of chapter five's autopsy. It touches on prejudice, racism, horrors of war, love and relationships.

A reader from Belmont read *Snow Image* by Nathaniel Hawthorne: It is a fun read that describes a cold, snowy winter day. Good description of how pure and creative kid's imagination is.

A reader from Salem read *Snowblind* by Ragnar Jónasson: Hi, Mack. Once again, here we are for a snowstorm of emotions. It's January and with it, the very cold winter has come and not yet gone. This time, however, it's cold outside as well as inside. Reading a book about winter, during winter while facing actual snowstorms... Almost a crime, but, who's to judge? The book is pretty good, engaging, but also cold, as I guess it should be. Past and present mix in the lives of the inhabitants of a small town in the North of Iceland where a famous writer dies in an innocent accident. However, the more one looks, the more it looks like a murder and Ari, the new cop in town, is tasked with the investigation. The problem is that Ari Thór has issues of his own to overcome while trying to cope with a series of firsts like his first winter in town and his first Christmas away from his beloved girlfriend. Will he be able to see the truth when he cannot even see beyond his own struggles? The whiteness of snow can blind us while it can also help us clearly see droplets of a red viscous liquid by the body of a naked woman...

A reader from Worcester read *Snowblind* by Ragnar Jonasson: The northern Icelandic town in which this thriller is set is spectacularly atmospheric! It serves as its own wintery character in this excellent first book in the Dark Iceland series by Jonasson. Would highly recommend for anyone who enjoys the Nordic Noir genre.

A reader from WATERTOWN read *Snowblind* by Ragnar Jonasson: Suspenseful mystery with a unique setting in a small town in Iceland. Didn't guess who did it all.

A reader from North Attleboro read *Snowbody Loves Me* by Jacki James: An absolutely ADORABLE Christmas tale!! I wish I had discovered it before Christmas, because it would have cured my Christmas Blues in a heartbeat, but it definitely warmed my soul on this

cold New England day! Now I have to go back and read more about Christmas Falls to keep the joy going!

A reader from Malden read *Snowed In* by Catherine Walsh: A delightful Christmas romcom that didn't feel super Christmas-y, so perfect for January! Fake dating is always fun, and it's nice to see it done with good communication (between the main couple, at least) and minimal mutual pining.

A reader from Ayer read *Snowed In* by Navessa Allen: This was a heartwarming story of an ex football player navigating the long terms effects of possible brain damage and the artist he met in the middle of bum fuck nowhere, Maine. The humor from both of the main characters made the book enjoyable, even during some of the darker scenes. Overall, an honest portrayal of mental illness and, most importantly, dog ownership.

A reader from Springfield read *Snowglobe* by Park, Soyoung; Jounghmin Lee Comfort (Translator): Interesting and original dystopian story, I'm not finished yet but I'm enjoying it so far!

A reader from Westfield read *Snowmen at Night* by Caralyn Beuhner: This was just for fun. I love the idea of things we consider inanimate having a secret life of their own when we are not watching. The snowmen's activities are also an inspiration to get out and enjoy the wintry weather.

A reader from Rindge read *Snug In Iceland* by Victoria Walker: It's about Rachel, who goes to Iceland for work. She is from the UK and not used to the Icelandic Winters. She ends up finding love in Iceland. It was cute but I felt that the ending was rushed.

A reader from Reading read *Solstice* by Nina Maglaughlin: It's contains vivid imagery on the musings of the solstice and the lack of light in general.

A reader from Carver read *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson: I enjoyed this historical fiction mystery. David Guterson did a nice job in portraying prejudices of that time. Although I did not like all of the characters, particularly Carl's wife I enjoyed the effort put into developing multiple characters from which we saw this event through.

A reader from Haverhill read *Soon*: An exciting horror novel set in Australia in the winter around the time of the winter solstice when the characters have to face a mysterious and horrifying entity that threatens the safety of the town and its few remaining inhabitants. I'm not usually a thriller/horror reader but I'm glad I had the courage to pick this one up from my local library (Haverhill Public Library) and try something new. While I initially had a tough time getting into this book because it felt slow starting out, I'm glad I was able to give it a chance and push through my skepticism around the genre and trying new things as a

whole. I enjoyed this book more than I was expecting to and I feel that reading it has made potential future endeavors into the thriller/horror genres feel more within my capacity and level of interest.

A reader from Beverly read *Spectacular* by Stephanie Garber: A holiday "special" that followed the original story line, was concise, to the point and marvelous! Legend is such a quirky and tricky character and the way he leads Tella around in this is exactly the gift for her.

A reader from Bellingham read *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik: A interesting, dark fantasy retelling of Rumpelstiltskin. Beautiful prose and winter imagery, and 3 very likeable female main characters. While I found how the author switched between POVs a little difficult at times, overall the story was enjoyable. 3.5 stars.

A reader from Arlington read *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik: *Spinning Silver* is set in a world where the winters keep getting longer. Miryem, the daughter of an unsuccessful moneylender, begins to collect the debts owed to her father, which sets off a series of events involving several other characters, including the king of the ice kingdom of the Saryk, a mysterious race feared by the people of Miryem's world.

A reader from Boston read *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik: I thought this was a fresh take on retelling the Rumpelstiltskin fairy tale. In this version winter is slowly taking over the land, becoming longer and more intense each year. As the villagers struggle to survive, Miryem, one of the main characters, has to keep finding new ways to turn silver into gold in order to avoid becoming ice. While I found the story intriguing, I found the writing style a bit detached from the characters emotionally. The story flips frequently between POVs without warning, which was hard to follow at times. I did find the role of winter and finding a fair balance in the story interesting.

A reader from Dracut read *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik: 3 families, silver to gold, and a ruthless winter that never ends. *Spinning Silver* is a New York Times bestselling, award-nominated retelling of Rumpelstiltskin set in an Eastern European-inspired country.

A reader from Arlington read *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik: I love fairytale retellings, so it was very fun to read this one based on Rumpelstiltskin! I loved the world she created and it was refreshing to read the story from multiple characters' POVs.

A reader from Wilmington read *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik: The paths of three very different women intersect to combat the forces of winter, dark magic, and political power struggles in this Rumpelstiltskin-esque tale. This was the perfect winter read with its melange of complex characters, cold landscapes, and folklore coming alive. I'll be picking up more books by this author in the future.

A reader from Chestnut Hill read *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik: If you're looking for a cozy book to make the winter a bit softer, this isn't it. But if you're looking for a well-woven, complex interpersonal story of rags-to-riches and surviving an ever-consuming winter, this is your book. Novik's descriptions bring the winter to life, and each of her characters has a unique voice and story. I loved how human every character, even side ones, felt. Every action felt reasonable considering the circumstances. The fantasy elements always felt mystical, which made the characters' interactions with them even more suspenseful. I would definitely recommend this book as a winter read!

A reader from Cambridge read *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik: I'd been meaning to read this book for years, and the January prompt finally got me to pull it off my shelf. It's a bit of a slow start introducing the full cast of characters, but once their stories start mingling, the book really takes off! Novik's writing is descriptive without being too flowery, really evoking both the threat and the magic of a deep winter. I could have used another 20 pages or so at the end (an epilogue would've fit well here), but I'm satisfied with the ending.

A reader from East Freetown read *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik: This was an exciting read full of magic and witty women. I thoroughly enjoyed this fantasy read! The winter setting enhanced the atmosphere of this book.

A reader from Medford read *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik: Love a modern but rustic fairy tale that hits all the right notes.

A reader from Franklin read *Spy Ski School* by Stuart Gibbs: It was funny when the helicopter got blown up! I would recommend this book if people like snow and humorous fiction.

A reader from CAMBRIDGE read *Stag Dance* by Torrey Peters: Such incredible writing and loved the playing with genres and gender.

A reader from Franklin read *Starry Night* by Debbie Macomber: This was a heartwarming book that embodied love and honoring someone's personal preferences with respect.

A reader from Amesbury read *Stolen* by Ann Helen Laestadius: Very intense. Excellent writing.

A reader from Rochester read *Stolen* by Ann-Helén Laestadius: 5/5 stars, incredible story.

A reader from Rochester read *Sula* by Toni Morrison: It's a story of two girls, Nell and Sula, their coming of age and friendship in a black community in Ohio. As black feminist literature, a thought provoking set of dynamics forces the reader to fill in the gaps and become an active participant in the story. Heavy reading but worth while for a book club discussion. Morrison was a genius!

A reader from New Bedford read *Sula* by Toni Morrison: This book is a beautifully written exploration of friendship between Black women, the shaping of girls into women as they grow through societal expectations, and the consequences of acceptance or rejection of those societal norms.

A reader from Halifax read *Sun and Shadow* by Ake Edwardson: A detective in Sweden struggles with his worldview when a couple is found murdered in their apartment near his own. Winter is about to have a child and his girlfriend is moving in with him, he has a father experiences a medical scare and his mother worries, he struggles with loss of control, a disorganized life clashing with a very organized profession, hes usually distand and can seperate himself but this is different. he sees his own life in this couple and struggles to stay objective and calm when emotions seep in. I found out this is the third in the series, but it was the first to be translated into english which intrigued me. Clearly, it was sought after to be translated into English, and I read a lot of both non-fiction and fiction crime and mystery novels, so I was intrigued when I saw it on the January reading challenge table at my local library. It takes place in winter, and I liked that the main character was detective Erik Winter, who everyone calls winter so it worked on two levels, and I thought it would be a great start to my reading challenge journey. Overall its a great read, suspenseful and filled with detailed descriptions and symbolism. I'm 20, and the book came out in 1999, so there were a few references I had to ask my mom about, but it didn't bother me. I plan to read the others in the series and would recommend.

A reader from Stoneham read *Sweetgirl* by Travis Mulhauser: Intense story - generational poverty/addiction and dysfunction. Percy is amazing!

A reader from Ipswich read *Taaqtumi: An Anthology of Arctic Horror Stories* by many (anthology): Like many anthologies, some stories are better than others. Although I didn't find any of the stories bad, none of them were really edge-of-my-seat horror. Just atmospheric and a little basic, and they felt like the authors needed more length to build a good story. It makes me appreciate the amount of skill and effort needed to craft a really good short story.

A reader from Gloucester read *Ten Thousand Miles with a Dog Sled* by Hudson Stuck: This book is a multipart memoir by the Episcopalian archdeacon of Alaska first published in 1914 about his extensive travels to visit missions and settlements throughout the central and northern areas of Alaska. He begins with a lengthy account of his 1906 circuit of 2,500 miles by dog sled conducted during the winter, his second such tour. So many parts of the book are fascinating and full of both practical and speculative information about everything he encountered - weather (snow, ice, wind, extreme cold, Northern Lights); technology of the time; the rise and rapid fall of gold mining operations and towns; people, both white

(usually destructive) and native (gentle and endangered); dogs (Husky, Malamute, and Siwash, and their uses and breeding.) From my 2026 perspective, Stuck's lowering opinion of native people from his idealization of them in 1906 to his more experienced takes by 1914 made for pretty uncomfortable reading. Despite that, Stuck probably was a notable champion and protector, saving his most savage comments for whites who preyed on natives. Stuck writes well and engagingly throughout about the passion he has for Alaska. He is most famous for leading the first expedition that successfully summited Denali and wrote another book about it. I would read it happily. Curling up with this book this cold January made me appreciate how warm we really are here in Massachusetts.

A reader from Plymouth read *the academy* by elin hildebrand: She wrote this book with her daughter. So the style is so different from her usual writing.

A reader from Norton read *The Alaska Saga* by Tracie Peterson: Love this book! My first one set in Alaska; will definitely read again.

A reader from Dracut read *The Baby Dragon Bookshop* by A. T. Qureshi: If you love books that feel like hallmark movies, but with dragons and chimeras, this book may be for you. Unfortunately, it was a bit too cheesy for me to full enjoy.

A reader from Stoneham read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: This was a beautiful and atmospheric fairy tale, with rich and evocative prose. It was a bit slower paced than I was expecting, but I really enjoyed it.

A reader from Foxborough read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: This is a great book, but it is not a fast read. At times it felt as long as the Russian winters it describes, but stick with it and you'll be glad you did.

A reader from Wilbraham read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: In book one of the Winternight trilogy, readers start Vasilisa's story. Born to Russian nobility in the northern wilderness, her mother dies shortly after childbirth but her nursemaid raises her with traditional beliefs until her step-mother enters the picture and forbids the family from honoring the local spirits. As the gifts to the spirits dwindle, hardships increase. Vasilisa must stand strong, brave, and determined as she grows into herself. I enjoyed the story overall. I like that it was a fantasy book with less fighting than many others I've read. The characters grew and changed through the story, adding depth. I like that it didn't end on a big cliffhanger and also that there are more books to read to continue the story.

A reader from Lakeville read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: A blend of historical fiction and fantasy results in a story a bit too "modern" for my tastes. Beautiful prose, though!

A reader from Amesbury read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: Kinda fantastical folk.

A reader from Monson read *The Bear and The Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: The beautiful writing of Katherine Arden was so colorful and captivating that I was quickly drawn into this story. Although, the genre was not a favorite of mine, I was easily persuaded to suspend my disbelief and enjoy this book very much.

A reader from Attleboro read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: Perfect book (& theme!) for the middle of winter. It was atmospheric and showed both a mastery of culture and human nature.

A reader from SIDNEY read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: A great mix of actual history and fantasy. Good worldbuilding. Enjoyed the book so much I got the rest of the trilogy. 10/11

A reader from Beverly read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: Would not have chosen this one on my own - thanks for the recommendation.

A reader from Billerica read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: Set in medieval Russia, it re-tells an old folk tale of Frost, the king of black mid-winter, and Vasilisa, a wild girl with many special abilities and dangerous gifts. A multi-layered, well written fantasy that I couldn't put down and highly recommend.

A reader from Melrose read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: For those sensitive to people dying, you may want to avoid. For the rest, this was a very entertaining fantasy book. I really found it a fast read and can't wait to dive into the sequel.

A reader from Brookline read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: I read this book almost a decade ago, and have been meaning to reread it for a few years. I'm glad I finally did! I think it holds up well, and I found myself just as engrossed with it as I was the first time I read it.

A reader from Amherst read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: A beautifully atmospheric read that feels tailor-made for winter. *The Bear and the Nightingale* draws deeply on cold landscapes, folklore, and long, dark nights, making it a perfect fit for a winter-themed challenge. Even from the outset, it promises a cozy yet haunting story where snow, spirits, and survival are woven together in a way that really captures the season.

A reader from Milford read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: I'm really into folklore and fairytales lately, and this book was the perfect winter read to scratch that itch. Like many fantasy books (I'm thinking of Harry Potter and *Circe*, but I'm sure there are others), *The Bear and the Nightingale* asserts that Death is not to be feared, but is the sole

element that brings order to humanity's chaos. It is not our curse, but our gift--what allows us presence, attention, and love. In an age where my attention is constantly under threat of being usurped by the flashiest screen, that message hits home.

A reader from Northfield read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: Not what I was expecting, but I enjoyed the book overall. I find myself interested now to seek out literature set in the context of Eastern European folklore which is actually written by someone of that background, and/or to learn more about the actual historical context.

A reader from Northampton read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: Katherine Arden's *The Bear and the Nightingale* follows Vasilisa "Vasya" Petrovna, a girl in medieval Rus' who can see the household spirits that protect her village. As a new priest arrives and urges the villagers to abandon their old beliefs, the protective spirits weaken, allowing darker forces to rise. Vasya must navigate family pressure, religious fear, and the growing threat of the winter demon Morozko to save her home. The novel blends folklore, faith, and coming-of-age into a dark, atmospheric fairy-tale.

A reader from Braintree read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: My pick for this month was the fantasy "The Bear and the Nightingale" by Katherine Arden, the first of a trilogy. Steeped in Russian folklore, magic, faith, and names (a bit of a challenge but well worth it), the strong heroine, Vasya (Vasilisa) will enchant, inspire and soon have you on her side as she must determine her destiny to return her world to a balance of the Christian Deity and the spirits of folk magic where they can co-exist. Is Vasya the one who must battle to restore order in their many layered world?

A reader from North Reading read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: I really enjoyed this fantasy and am looking forward to the rest of the series. I loved the Russian folklore, lyrical writing, and strong female character.

A reader from Charlton read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: I found the author's use of time skips and perspective changes to be both fascinating and enjoyable!

A reader from Framingham read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: The visual imagery of the nature in the book was striking. Many of the characters' actions were frustrating or upsetting, but well written. There was also a bit of interesting parallelism between Dunya's stories and Vasya's experiences. Definitely planning to continue reading the next book in the series.

A reader from Rochester read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: Overall this book was enjoyable to read. I did find it challenging to understand at times though. It used a lot of Russian words that I was not familiar with but I was able to figure out what it meant by using the context of the sentence. The book follows a your girl who seemingly has

powers but she doesn't know what it all means until she starts to grow up. I would recommend this to anyone who likes reading fantasy stories.

A reader from Springfield read *The Bear and the Nightingale* by Katherine Arden: This book incorporates Russian fairytales in this story about a girl's childhood in rural Russia, up to the point where she starts to come into power inherited by her mother.

A reader from Fitchburg read *The Big Snow* by David Park: Set in Northern Ireland in 1963 the city and countryside are met with blizzard conditions. The vivid description of the cold and damp is bone chilling. No one is prepared for it. Among the various characters are stories of love found, lost and the anguish of betrayal.

A reader from Dalton read *The Black Wolf* by Louise Penny: My January pick was *The Black Wolf* by Louise Penny. It is a sequel to *The Grey Wolf*, which I read. Chief Inspector Gamache believes that there is a dangerous plot that threatens international stability. He and his team work to uncover a conspiracy involving environmental terrorism and political corruption. Gamache studies the evidence they have - two notebooks and a map. *The Black Wolf* takes place in Canada during winter. In the village of Three Pines the natural environment is cold and snowy. There are numerous images of the harsh, frozen wilderness in the book. This landscape adds to the themes of darkness and despair. This book was a political thriller with lots of corruption.

A reader from Palmer read *The Black Wolf* by Louise Penny: Louise Penny has once again released a book that totally surprises you. Her plots are atypical which is what draws you in and keeps you from putting the book down. By this book, which is number 20 in the series, the characters are your friends. You know them well, just not what their next challenge will be. But you know that they will succeed because they are all supremely intelligent and experienced.

A reader from Franklin read *The Black Wolf* by Louise Penny: The author, in a forward, says she wrote the book in 2024, then in 2025 started to see headlines that could have been taken from the book. I felt the same while reading it, and that's not helping me sleep.

A reader from Hadley read *The Blue Hour* by Laura Pritchett: A poignant look at the interwoven lives of a small mountain town in Colorado. Pritchett's prose was impressive all while shedding light on different topics of everyday life and relationships.

A reader from Fitchburg read *The Bog Wife* by Kay Chronister: I picked up this one because so many said it was one of the best they have read. I found it lacking something. What? I can't put my finger on. I also wish she would have done more with the ending.

A reader from Franklin read *The Book of Doors* by Gareth Brown: Set in New York in winter with travel to other areas and times. Slow start but turned into a page turner.

A reader from North Attleboro read *The Boys of Winter* by Wayne Coffey: A recap of the 1980 Lake Placid winter Olympics "Miracle on Ice" hockey game, the underdog USA team versus the very strong Soviet favorites. The book gave a recap of how the players and coaching staff were chosen and their backstories as well as their post-Olympic achievements. There was some information about the Soviet players, playing style and what made them so tough to play against.

A reader from Fitchburg read *The call of the wild* by Jack London: Fantastic, short read. Classic adventure story!

A reader from Stoughton read *The Catcher In the Rye* by JD Salinger: Holden is quite a character!

A reader from Eastham read *The Children's Blizzard* by David Laskin: The winter of 1888 was typically cold and stormy in the Great Plains. But January 12 started out unseasonably warm, so children headed off to school without their winter coats, hats, and mittens, and farmers went out into the fields in lighter clothing than normal. Suddenly, the sky exploded, unleashing a massive blizzard. Temperatures dropped and winds picked up to hurricane force, blowing snow and ice sideways. People couldn't see their hands in front of their faces. The children were still in school, and the young schoolteachers, many still teenagers, had to decide whether to send the children, with only lightweight clothing, home, some as far as several miles, in the blizzard or keep them in the school and risk running out of fuel and food. It's estimated that 500 people, many of them children, froze to death that afternoon and night. Also dead were livestock that were out in the fields. My library has two books with the same name, both about this real event. One is a historical fiction version, and the other is the nonfiction version I read. The author gave a lot of background information on weather formation, weather forecasting, and the contemporaneous state of weather reporting to help paint the picture of the circumstances that led to this catastrophe. He also includes, based on records and interviews, individual accounts of survivors and victims. It was a fascinating and extremely sad read about an event I'd known nothing about.

A reader from Oxford read *The Children's Blizzard* by David Laskin: I was not aware of this blizzard that the story revolved around. The author did an exceptional job of putting you right in the midst of it all! Knowing this was based on a real time in history, it was sometimes difficult to imagine the responsibilities of these young teachers and learning

about the aftermath of this deadly blizzard. I'm glad to have read it with my book group who also appreciated it.

A reader from Tyngsborough read *The Children's Blizzard* by Melanie Benjamin: This historical fiction book was heartbreaking. The author did a great job in describing the blizzard on the Great Plains and how people got caught in it. Definitely a good read but I was not impressed with the author's note at the end bringing up climate change - which had nothing to do with this Blizzard.

A reader from Parkland read *The Children's Blizzard* by Melanie Benjamin: Melanie Benjamin's story about the "Schoolhouse Blizzard" was both heartwarming and chilling about the split decisions you make that change lives forever. I was grateful to be reading this while sitting by a warm fire in Vermont! I felt compassion for the characters and wanted to read more about the actual people and events of this 1/12/1888 blizzard. This was a story that needed to be told!

A reader from Stoughton read *The Children's Blizzard* by Melanie Benjamin: This is a fictional portrayal of the children lost the the January 12, 1888 when an unexpected blizzard hit the Dakoto Territories in the US. The loss of life and limbs from frostbite further upended the already difficult lives of immigrant homesteaders. There is heartbreak and grief, guilt and redemption. Highly recommend!

A reader from Grafton read *The Children's Blizzard* by Melanie Benjamin: I won't spoil it but the description on the jacket sure did... Fast-paced and character driven story of children and their teachers caught in a sudden blizzard on the prairie in 1888.

A reader from Belchertown read *The Christmas Appeal* by Janice Hallett: British author and the whole book is done via emails. If you wish to solve it, read slowly. My copy is going to the Recycle Bin.

A reader from Weymouth read *The Christmas Box* by Richard Paul Evans: Lovely story.

A reader from Salisbury read *The Christmas Box* by Richard Paul Evans: Very simple - do you know what the first Christmas gift was? A lesson taught to a young father by an old dying lady. The answer is the most meaningful, true gift. Very uplifting.

A reader from Bellingham read *The Christmas Guest* by Peter Seanson: The story was fine but there was no depth, no character development. Not likely to recommend to others

A reader from Longmeadow read *The Christmas Riddle* by Susan Sleeman: This book is set in a town in Maine at Christmas time. It was filled with cold weather and snow which I could relate to after we had 20 inches of snow over the weekend! It is a mystery from the Country Sampler Antique Shop Mysteries series. Country Sampler is a magazine that features home

decorating tips. The protagonist is the owner of an antique store who solves a mystery while also working with the Historical Society to decorate an old mansion in 1800's Christmas memorabilia. It was delightful to read.

A reader from Salisbury read *The Christmas Stranger* by Richard Paul Evans: A very uplifting story - a story of love lost, love found. the bringing together of families - the threads that pull it all together. Spiritual and heartwarming.

A reader from Bellingham read *The Christmas wedding guest* by Susan Mallery: First book in a romance series in a town called Wishing Tree where the gathering center is called "The Wreath" and all but one of the stores is Christmas oriented.

A reader from Hyde Park read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis: I read the first 4 books of this series. The first one, *The Lion, the witch and the wardrobe* is set in winter!

A reader from WEST SPRINGFIELD read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C. S. Lewis: Reading this as adult and knowing the metaphor behind it was such a beautiful experience. I appreciate the fullness of the story in not that many pages. I will absolutely be reading this book to my children!

A reader from Dracut read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis: Revisited an old classic for the winter feels!

A reader from Oak Bluffs read *The coldest ground* by Declan James: Another great Jake Cashen mystery!

A reader from Norton read *The Crash* by Freida McFadden: The plot revolves around a car crash in a winter blizzard. I believe I liked this book simply due to the twist- I didn't see it coming! I do wish I saw some trigger warnings before I read the book.

A reader from Danvers read *The Crash* by Freida McFadden: A very twisty thriller set during a blizzard in Maine. Really didn't expect the ending like many other Freida McFadden books.

A reader from North Attleboro read *The Crash* by Freida McFadden: Not the biggest Freida fan but thought this was a nice quick read. Set in Maine in the winter.

A reader from Ware read *The Crash* by Freida McFadden: Really enjoyed this book! It was a very easy and enjoyable read, very quick read as well. It has me hooked right from the start and I literally could not put it down!

A reader from Wakefield read *The Crash* by Frieda McFadden: I thought this was going to be another version of "The Housemaid" book because its starts off that way. But I actually thought it was even better! I did not see the ending coming!

A reader from Marstons Mills read *The Crash* by Freida McFadden: *The Crash* is set in Maine about a young woman who is pregnant and hoping her situation and circumstances will finally change after one stroke of a pen. Unfortunately, her memory has other plans. She braves the cold and tries to make it to her brother's house before a big storm hits only to find herself in a precarious situation having to rely on a mysterious couple. The woman soon finds out that the cold isn't the only thing she'll have to brave to save herself and her unborn child.

A reader from Wakefield read *The Crash* by Freida McFadden: This was a fast paced thriller. I thought I had it figured out a few times, but then something would change, and it kept me on 'the edge of my seat' until the very end. It was the first I have read from this offer and I very much enjoyed it.

A reader from Raynham read *The Crash* by Freida McFadden: *The Crash* is another solid Frieda McFadden thriller. I always love her plot twists. Although some twists were predictable and others were a little far fetched, it was a good read that kept me turning the pages to find out what happened next! I especially enjoyed reading it during the big January snowstorm we received.

A reader from Barre read *The Crash* by Freida McFadden: This book was ok. It seemed to drag. It doesn't seem like her normal style. Some parts really dragged. The twist seemed too much. There were parts not addressed (like the husband and wife's dynamic). This would be one Frieda McFadden book that you can put off until you read her others. Don't make your decision about her based on this book.

A reader from Ludlow read *The Crash* by Freida McFadden: I thought it was a great book! I've read a lot of her books and this one was by far my favorite! A woman named Tegan who's pregnant goes out into a snowstorm and ends up getting into a crash and getting stranded but rescued by people who aren't letting her leave! A bunch of twists and turns happen through out as well, SO great. What a great ending

A reader from Rochester read *The Crash* by Freida McFadden: What a book to read during that snow storm! In it, a woman, eight months pregnant, takes off in a blizzard, crashes her car off a country road, and is "rescued" by a local couple. They keep her in their basement while she recovers....Suspenseful! It surely kept my mind off the storm while I raced to finish it.

A reader from Ludlow read *THE Crash* by Frieda McFadden: *The Crash* was a must read! It was a gripping psychological thriller with unexpected twists.

A reader from Brookline read *The Crystal Shard* by R.A. Salvatore: A classic high fantasy adventure novel, the first published featuring Dungeons and Dragons hero Drizzt Do'Urden.

As a dungeon master I enjoyed reading about an adventure of this tropey hero and his companions as they battle to save the people of Icewind Dale from various threats.

A reader from Groton read *The Cuffing Game* by Lyla Lee: A film student tries to get over her crush by creating a reality tv game show where contestants confess their love for a crush. But the twist? Her crush is chosen as one of the contestants.

A reader from Yarmouth read *The Dark is Rising* by Susan Cooper: This was a fun read mid-winter, following the protagonist in “real time” as his adventures align with the calendar dates leading up to Twelfth Night, aka January 6th.

A reader from Blandford read *The Dead* by James Joyce: I came late to the game this year, and am a slow reader and did not have time for a full novel. So I read *The Dead*, naturally. And as a bonus, I read *To Build a Fire* by Jack London in time for the bitterest temperatures this winter. You can't get any better than these two winter tales!

A reader from Ipswich read *The Deaths of December* by Susi Holliday: Quite a read. Very well done by the author. A grim story of Advent deaths in the vain hope that the cops will reopen the case of his sister's murder.

A reader from Fitchburg read *The Deep, Deep Snow* by Brian Freeman: I didn't realize there was a second book to this, however I hope the second book picks up on some of the loose ends from this one. This was an enjoyable read, very easy to get sucked into and wanting more. The layers of the story and its twists and turns really surprised me.

A reader from Greenfield read *The Degenerates* by J. Albert Mann: Brutal but beautiful YA historical fiction about four friends at the Massachusetts School for the Feeble Minded in the 1920's

A reader from Plymouth read *The Do-Over* by Lynn Painter: This book really cute! It was a rom-com set around Valentines day, and it was a fun read and the fourth book I've read by Lynn Painter!

A reader from Albuquerque read *The Dog Who Followed the Moon* by James Norbury: This is a beautiful tale with incredible artwork. This book reminds us of the power of following your heart and helping one another. The author masterfully awakens our inner child with the joys of a picture book while drawing down the wisdom from elder-hood.

A reader from Allston read *The Dogs of Venice* by Steven Rowley: It was a short but heart warming book. The story guides us through a journey of a person trying to find a connection in a world he thinks is trying to leave him behind. You watch the character learn to love and treasure himself instead of relying on someone else to do that for him.

A reader from Dracut read *The Dogs of Winter* by Robbie Pyron: Although there were many hardships and the subject matter was difficult, the author is an excellent storyteller. He was able to offer hopefulness and transport you. I felt as though, I was in Russia during never ending snow storms. In addition, he captures the true essence of dog and man's relationship, humanity and faith. I enjoyed this book which was based on a true story.

A reader from Attleboro read *The Drop* by Dennis Lehane: Good book, I always enjoy reading Dennis Lehane books.

A reader from Osterville read *The Dry Grass of August* by Anna Jean Mayhew: Disturbing. Forced a lens on our continued societal inability (refusal) to eradicate racism. People are still being "disappeared". And I identified all too closely with Jubie, as the abused non-golden child. Yet, I am grateful that I read this book. An uncomfortable, but necessary, read.

A reader from Waltham read *The edge of winter* by Betty Neels: Love story between a young headstrong nurse and a teasing doctor set in England and Holland.

A reader from NORTHAMPTON read *The Eight heartbreaks of Hanukkah* by Jean Meltzer: Cute interpretation of the Christmas Carol.

A reader from Dracut read *The Enchanted Greenhouse* by Sarah Beth Durst: This book was in the same fantasy world as *The Spellshop* but it is more of a crossover than an actual sequel.

A reader from Woburn read *The Enchanted Greenhouse* by Sarah Beth Durst: A cozy winter magical romance.

A reader from Dartmouth read *The Enchanted Greenhouse* by Sarah Beth Durst: A former librarian works to help a gardener save his failing magical greenhouses in the midst of a brutal winter. Wonderful story of working together and finding purpose and community where you least expect it. Such a cozy and heartwarming read!

A reader from North Reading read *The Enchanted Greenhouse* by Sarah Beth Durst: Fantasy Novel set in the winter on a magical island inhabited by two lonely people, intriguing and mysterious animals and plants. Easy to read while getting drawn in to the characters as they develop and provide hope for the future.

A reader from Southborough read *The End of Drum-Time* by Hanna Pylvainen: 1851. Inside the Arctic Circle, Scandinavia. The indigenous people, called the Sami (or Lapps to the Europeans) are reindeer herders. Seasonally moving the herds from the sea to the mountains. The daughter of a Swedish Lutheran minister who is trying to convert the Sami leaves her family to follow her heart with a Sami man. The description of the harsh weather and travels in the Arctic region are breathtaking. The cold, the ice and snow can be felt. The

intrusion of the government in trying to set up borders between Swedish and Russian lands for people who need the free range of land for the reindeer which are their lifeline causes a crisis. impossible choices for the Sami. an amazing story.

A reader from Marlborough read *The Family You Make* by Jill Shalvis: A well-written story about people who you choose to be part of your family. How strangers can become family, sometimes quickly, sometimes over a long span of time.

A reader from Plymouth read *The Family You Make* by Jill Shalvis: Started with some action, carried the intrigue through the length of the book. Likable characters, relatable family, enjoyable story. Definitely adding this author to my regular reading list!

A reader from Manchester read *The Favorites* by Layne Fargo: Perfect book for winter leading up to Olympics and the *Wuthering Heights* movie.

A reader from Peabody read *The Fox Wife* by Yangze Choo: A detective story that dives into mythological folklore across Asian Cultures.

A reader from North Chelmsford read *The Fox Wife* by Yangsze Choo: I found the *Fox Wife* engaging yet frustrating, it felt like it had the pieces to be a unique and emotional tale, early 1900s Manchuria, Chinese fox folklore, a revenge story, but doesn't quite deliver on the character or writing style front so we are left with a forgettable story that doesn't quite feel like anything was accomplished. 2/5

A reader from Melrose read *The Fox Wife* by Yangsze Choo: A beautiful read that unfurls like a mystery novel.

A reader from Quincy read *The Fox Wife* by Yangsze Choo: A very fun read! I liked the two protagonists a great deal and the way the story unfolded was amazing. Highly recommended!

A reader from Brookline read *The Frozen* by Ariel Lawhon: Fascinating novel based on a real life midwife/healer in Maine in the 18th Century. (*A Midwife's Tale*, non-fiction book based on her diaries, is a companion piece. Part mystery, but more important an interesting look into history.)

A reader from Franklin read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Fantastic read based on the real diary records of midwife Martha Ballard. I related to her commiseration about New England winters while reading this.

A reader from Milton read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: On the surface, this book tells the story of a rape and murder trial in 1780s Maine. However, the depth of story covers the intricate life of one midwife, her family and townsfolk. It is a story about justice, as well as

the injustice women often face. Reading this book during cold and snowy January enhanced the mood, as so much of the book took place during a snowy and frozen winter.

A reader from Pittsfield read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Gripping historical fiction mystery.

A reader from Ipswich read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: A wonderful winter curl up in a chair read especially for New Englanders. The role of the midwife historically enlightening, as well as how the American Revolution reached to very rural areas. The plot became a page turner for me.

A reader from New Bedford read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawson: Riveting. Hard to put down. Definitely need to read more by this author.

A reader from Charlton read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Such a wonderful book!

A reader from Dedham read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: This was a wonderful book in my favorite genre- historical fiction! I'm also originally from Maine and now live in Boston, so I enjoyed the setting and learning more about this time period in New England!

A reader from Worcester read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Great book!

A reader from Chicopee read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: I was hooked on this book from the beginning. It was suspenseful and tender and it was nice to read about a strong female character in a time period where women struggled. The perfect book to read in the winter!

A reader from Athol read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Martha, Martha, Martha! Wow! Even though the story went a little slow after finding the dead man in the river, it was entertaining. I read books cover to cover and enjoy the acknowledgment section. The author also took a chapter to provide insight on how she came about to write the book. I appreciate her using her liberties to re write this story. Highly recommend.

A reader from Lebanon read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhorn: Historic fiction perfect for a cold New England winter!

A reader from Erving read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Starts slow but turns into an excellent read.

A reader from Deerfield read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: I couldn't put the book down. I love that the story was based on a real person and the added info about her life that Ariel Lawhon added at the end. I love strong female characters and Martha Ballard did not disappoint.

A reader from North Reading read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawton: Very good, especially when comparing it to *The Diary of Martha Ballard*. I would recommend both books to those interested in midwifery.

A reader from Pepperell read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawton: Historical fiction is not my favorite but I had heard such great comments about this book I gave it a try. Excellent! Lived up to the hype!

A reader from Georgetown read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawton: Takes place in Maine near the Kennebec River where the main character, a midwife, chronicles the births/deaths of townspeople and this information becomes a critical focus during an intense trial for a mysterious crime in town.

A reader from North Attleborough read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawton: I was completely enthralled with the story. So much so that I couldn't put it down. Read it in one weekend.

A reader from Buzzards Bay read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawton: Martha Ballard is the hero of the story. Trustworthy, honest and brave. A midwife that helps identify the dead body as well as the cause of death. She's not afraid to stand up to make sure the truth is heard and justice is served.

A reader from Salem read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawton: *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawton is a historical mystery set in 1789 Maine, inspired by the real diary of midwife Martha Ballard. When a body is discovered trapped in the frozen Kennebec River, Martha's medical knowledge draws her into a troubling investigation that challenges official accounts and powerful men. As winter deepens, the novel explores justice, resilience, and women's voices in a young nation where truth is often inconvenient.

A reader from Boston read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawton: I had no idea that this was based on an actual person until I read the authors note at the end of the book! I really appreciated hearing about the process the author went through to write this novel and I think it's a really interesting character study and exploration of early American life from the perspective of a woman. I had a bit of trouble getting through this to be honest, not because the book isn't good but because the subject matter is tough to read at times. It's a reminder of the many ways throughout history that women have been treated as unworthy of fair treatment and power. I had to put down the book at times because it really felt like there was no justice and it stressed me out. But ultimately I think that's just true to the way it was and still is.

A reader from Beverly read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawton: I enjoyed reading about a strong, smart, funny, and kind woman. Lawton really made me feel the impact of the winter setting on the characters and on the story itself.

A reader from North Attleboro read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Set in rural Maine in 1789 tells the story of a mid-wife along the frozen Kennebec River. Her job puts her in direct conflict with the male dominated society as she works to help the women of the community in more ways than one.

A reader from Weymouth read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: This book had such a strong sense of place and time. I could really imagine what it was like to live in 18th century Maine.

A reader from North Attleboro read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: This book was amazing, totally blew me away. It was such a page turner, I couldn't put it down! I loved the character of Martha. I loved how strong and confident she was, especially for the time this book is set in. I was surprised and thrilled to learn she is based on a real woman of the same name and I am now reading her biography!

A reader from Milton read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Intense and riveting, *The Frozen River* is a historical novel inspired by the diaries of real-life midwife, Martha Ballard, in late 1700s Maine. Told mostly as a first person account, the novel opens with a body found frozen in the river. Martha attended many births but was also called on to examine and attest to causes of death, which she does regarding the body found in the river. Controversy ensues. Part of the story takes place in Massachusetts. The author's note, with instructions not to read before finishing the book, has interesting facts. Although much has changed since the 1700s, much remains the same.

A reader from Bellingham read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Enjoyed it very much. Had a surprise ending.

A reader from Sandwich read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Great read! I don't usually enjoy murder mysteries. But this read so much like historical fiction and biography, that it was enjoyable.

A reader from Holliston read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: A terrific winter read! I am savoring the setting, the historical details and the hearts of these characters richly brought to life. This is a murder mystery told through the eyes of Martha Ballard, a fiction imagined from entries in her actual diary.

A reader from Arlington read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: A fast-paced story told by the main character, Martha Ballard, during the winter of 1789. This is a fictional story based on the life of Martha Ballard, a midwife who lived in both Massachusetts and Maine and kept a daily diary.

A reader from Andover read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: As someone who hardly reads historical fiction, I was surprised at how much I enjoyed *The Frozen River*! Inspired by real events, *The Frozen River* tells the story of Martha Ballard, a midwife living in Hallowell, Maine in the late 1700s. Come to find out, after finishing this book, I learned the Ballard family named a village in Andover!

A reader from Marshfield read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Excellent story. I loved reading about the life of Martha Ballard and learning about midwifery in the late 1700s with some murder mixed in.

A reader from Braintree read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhorn: A well told story about a remarkable woman. The authors commentary at the end about the ways she deviated from the diary that the book was inspired by was a wonderful addition and makes me want to read the nonfiction account of Martha Ballard's life.

A reader from Hadley read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Wonderful historical fiction based on the real diary of Martha Ballard.

A reader from Rochestr read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawton: A work of historical fiction , combined with a mystery and includes the struggle of women in what was considered a male profession in the 18th. century . The book is set in Maine. The main character is a midwife, Martha Ballard who also helps with medical examiner duties. A body is discovered frozen in a river and Ballard proceeds to unravel the mystery surrounding the death.

A reader from East Longmeadow read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Good read, would recommend to pick this up if you enjoy historical fiction novels.

A reader from Roslindale read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: 5/5 stars, an excellent and engaging read and set in Maine in the winter.

A reader from Dracut read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: A great book to read while snowed in during a weekend snow storm.

A reader from Holden read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: This book captured my attention during the weekend snowstorm and made me feel more ready to handle the long cold snap ahead. I was immersed in how challenging things were for women in the early days of our country and thought a lot about how things have changed and where change is still needed. I really enjoyed escaping into this book with all that is going on this cold, January month in our country. Thanks for the recommendation.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: I am in health care myself and interesting read of a strong, engaging woman in health care as a midwife in late 1700's.

Much of the story takes place in the cold winters in Maine. What strength - mentally and physically!

A reader from Swampscott read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: This historical mystery quickly reeled me in- I couldn't put it down... not overly descriptive, plenty of action and dialogue kept me reading.

A reader from Milton read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: In Hallowell, Maine, 1785 was referred to as "the year of the long winter." The Kennebec River was frozen solid from November 25 to April 22. The main story events for this book all occur within these dates. The diary of one of the town midwives really does exist. This book is a work of fiction that was inspired by events from that diary. The short chapters vividly illustrate how hard life was, particularly for women. In addition to their many everyday tasks there were the additional and necessary jobs of making candles, slaughtering and cooking the extra, bothersome roosters, etc. Childbirth was hard and dangerous. The women of Hallowell were lucky to have a kind and knowledgeable midwife in Martha Ballard. She tells the story of that winter starting with the horrific rape of the minister's wife through to the resolution in the spring. It is complicated by weather, politics, small town pettiness, miscommunications, and a new developing judicial system. This is a terrific book. A favorite thread is Martha's relationship with her husband Ephraim which she describes as being "in the twilight years of a long love affair."

A reader from Jamestown read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: I am a big fan of historical fiction and loved reading about the life of an 18th century midwife. The protagonist is well developed and inspiring. She shows that strong women could be educated and respected in that period. I highly recommend this book.

A reader from Agawam read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: I loved that this book spoke about a very strong woman, a woman of faith and integrity. It was also very interesting that this character lived in or near Oxford Ma. Her history and what leads from her occupation sets the stage for what we now utilize today in our time. Very good read.

A reader from Webster read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Excellent story of a small town, the underestimation of women and the meaning of friendship and family.

A reader from WAKEFIELD read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Historical fiction about a midwife in late 1700s Maine. A mystery, a good look into life then, a family story, and a very satisfying ending. Plus lots and lots of ice and snow. Would recommend if you like historical fiction with strong women lead characters.

A reader from Rochester read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: A great read for historical fiction enthusiasts. Set in a long cold New England winter, there are many characters to learn about through the story - my favorite is the main character!

A reader from Orange read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: A small town murder full of dark truths, brave women, and a chilling mystery. This historical fiction is packed full of complex characters and a woman determined to try and help others and bring justice.

A reader from North Andover read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Read for a book club and loved it! Suspenseful and interesting throughout entire book.

A reader from Newton read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Excellent book exploring themes of justice and punishment in Maine during the 1700s. The cold landscape mirrored the moral weight of the story. I enjoyed reading the author's note at the end about her research of the real midwife's journals and how she played with the timeline and story.

A reader from Cambridge read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: This was a perfect fit for the theme of "a book about winter"--not just any winter, but an especially long and cold Maine winter in 1789. I enjoyed this historical fiction mystery, especially its memorable central character, a midwife who refuses to be silent in the face of injustice toward women in her society. I did feel the book could have benefited from tighter editing, and I was distracted by some dialogue that did not seem to fit the time period. But it was still a cozy and engaging book to curl up with as I watched the snow falling out the window and felt grateful for our much improved heating technology.

A reader from Middleboro read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: This book was a great read, I was unsure if I would like it since it was set in 1789 but could not put it down. Was a great mystery and after reading the book and author's notes at the end it was interesting to realize that the book was based on an actual figure Martha Ballard.

A reader from Peabody read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Great historical fiction read perfect for winter!

A reader from Lynnfield read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Really inspiring portrayal of a woman standing firm in the face of injustice. Smart, emotional, and ultimately very satisfying.

A reader from Carver read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: Loved this book! It was based on healing, family, and the tough role of women. This is definitely a book I'll read again!

A reader from Agawam read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon: This book takes place 13 years after the Revolutionary War in Maine. The protagonist, Martha Ballard, is an esteemed mid-wife and healer with great medical knowledge. Unfortunately, because of her gender,

she is not always respected or taken seriously by everyone. The plot revolves around the discovery of a body found in the frozen river who turned out to be an accused rapist. His possible killer(s) include Martha's sons. She must use her intelligence, knowledge, and diaries to help her solve this crime. Historical Fiction is my favorite genre, so this was a perfect fit!

A reader from Gloucester read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhorn: Inspired by the true story of a midwife in the 18th century.

A reader from Charlton read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhorn: I really enjoyed this book.

A reader from Holyoke read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhorn: what a great book! makes me really think about winter in New England in the past and how hard it must have been.

A reader from Spencer read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhorn: Very much enjoyed the book. Liked that the setting was local and the story was based on the events that a midwife experienced in the late 1700s. The author researched the main character and created the story based on her written daybook.

A reader from Belchertown read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhorn: This was based on Marth Ballard, which I hadn't heard of. It sparked an interest to continue reading about her.

A reader from Haverhill read *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhorn: A chilling tale, fantastic historical details -early America, healthcare, family life, the law, the protagonist is based on an American Hero more people should know about.

A reader from Dedham read *The Gallagher Place* by Julie Doar: Murder mystery at a family homestead. Family secrets. Great descriptions of the land of upstate New York in winter.

A reader from Wrentham read *The Gingerbread Bakery* by Laurie Gilmore: The Gingerbread Bakery was the perfect easy light read to start the year off. A cute wintery book and a nice palette cleanser.

A reader from South Deerfield read *The Girl from Greenwich Street: A Novel of Hamilton, Burr, and America's First Murder Trial* by Lauren Willig: If you love Hamilton and all things colonial America, you will love this novel. It follows the trial of a woman found in an icy river through various perspectives. Definitely a page turner.

A reader from Haverhill read *The Girls Before* by Kate Alice Marshall: i received this read as an ARC! this one had me hooked immediately. audrey is still searching for her missing ex-bestie, haunted by the guilt of not being there when she needed her most. she believes finding her is the only way to move on, but nothing is what it seems. the twist wrecked me.

kate alice marshall knows exactly how to mess with your mind. if you love psychological thrillers, messy friendships, buried secrets and obsession, add this to your tbr!

A reader from East Longmeadow read *The Girls In The Snow* by Stacy Green: This book was interesting and kept my attention. Loved the thrilling ending!

A reader from Salem read *The Giver* by Lois Lowry: published in 1993; I had read this in middle school or high school and didn't remember liking it that much but it's really good as an adult.

A reader from Easthampton read *The Giver* by Lois Lowry: Rereading this book as an adult 16 years since I read it the first time really opened my eyes to how well written and thought provoking the story is. Lois Lowry does a great job turning everyday events into a sanitized shell of it well. I find Jonas journey throughout the book to be a powerful less about lack of diversity and how important knowledge and learning is.

A reader from Brookline read *The Glass Woman* by Caroline Lea: A haunting story with echoes of the French folktale, "Bluebeard," set in 17th century Iceland with its unforgiving winter, about the oppressive force of isolation, rumors and secrets, the role of women, and also of love and loyalty.

A reader from Middleton read *The Glass Woman* by Caroline Lea: 1680s Iceland. Rosa, out of necessity, leaves home to marry Jon, whose first wife, Anna, died under suspicious circumstances. She moves to a cold and lonely croft, discouraged from making friends and expected to work hard, keep quiet and be obedient. Very haunting.

A reader from Boxford read *The Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman: It took me a while to get into the world in which this story was set, but once I did, I enjoyed the childlike whimsy.

A reader from Amherst read *The Goldfinch* by Donna Tartt: Incredible and engrossing story! The characters were so lived in and I was enthralled from the moment I picked it up. The book takes place over many years and seasons, but the climatic events take place around Christmas time.

A reader from Braintree read *The Great Alone* by Kristen Hannah: I really liked the author's depiction of Alaska and the need to survive there.

A reader from Oak Bluffs read *The Great Alone* by Kristin Hannah: This book tore me apart and then put me back together again! It was the perfect break from my normal fantasy obsession and while it was extremely emotional and I definitely cried while reading, I highly recommend to anyone (provided they read the trigger warnings first).

A reader from Rochester read *The Great Alone* by Kristin Hannah: I have read a few of Kristin's books in the past and liked this one but it is not my favorite. She spends more than half the book on the difficulties of survival in the Alaskan wilderness and living with a paranoid, abusive father. Then when I was about to put it down she picks up the pace and has a lot of things going on. It seemed rushed at the end I felt some of the things that happened were just to add unnecessary suspense like she was writing it for a movie.

A reader from Orange read *The Great Alone* by Kristin Hannah: A family relocates to Alaska in the 1970s and learns to survive the harsh winters as well as their challenging family dynamic.

A reader from South Deerfield read *The great alone* by Kristin Hannah: A wonderfully written story of survival in the harshest of winter conditions in Alaska and a young girl's determination.

A reader from Braintree read *The great alone* by Kristen Hannah: Remarkably resilient people living thru the dust bowl and Depression forced to leave and move into the unknown with external constraints leading to change.

A reader from Seekonk read *The Great Alone* by Kristin Hannah: *The Great Alone* is a powerful, wintry read that wraps you up and quietly wrecks you. Kisin Hannah captures the beauty and brutality of isolation that has you feeling the cold, darkness and tension pressing in. It's emotional and perfect for winter reading by a fire when you want a story that lingers long after you close the book.

A reader from Somerville read *The Great Alone* by Kristin Hannah: Great read!

A reader from Wrentham read *The Great Alone* by Kristin Hannah: Loved this book!

A reader from Sidney read *The Greenglass House* by Kate Milford: It's about a family who runs an inn. Around Christmas time unexpected visitors arrive. Things get stolen from the guests and the main character tries to investigate with help from a new friend. There's a surprise twist at the end. It was an enjoyable book.

A reader from Weymouth read *The Half Moon* by Mary Beth Keane: This books takes place over the course of a week in early March and features two snowstorms. While not the central theme of the book, winter acts as an interesting backdrop to represent the loneliness and isolation that the characters feel from each other. Interesting and quick read with twists and turns.

A reader from Melbourne read *The Hallmarked Man* by Robert Galbraith: Another lengthy, fun book in the Cormoran Strike series, this one set in the timeframe around Christmas and late winter. The timeframe is coincidental, but fits perfectly with the MassBook challenge!

A reader from Vineyard Haven read *The Happy Ever After Playlist* by Abby Jimenez: Fun light vacation read for the family holiday trip.

A reader from North Andover read *The Heart in Winter* by Kevin Barry: Loved this book! I was roaming around the library when I came across this title. Having lived in Butte, Montana, I had to give it a try. The characters were so complex, the setting was what you would expect of a cold Montana winter. I think I probably enjoyed it so much having an understanding of Butte's rich mining and immigrant history. So glad I found this book! 4.5 stars!

A reader from Somerville read *The Heart in Winter* by Kevin Barry: A wild ride!

A reader from Arlington read *The Heart of Winter* by Jonathan Evison: A sweet story of a long term marriage between Abe and Ruth. I did like the character development between those two but I do wish some of the other characters had more depth to them.

A reader from Concord read *The Heart of Winter* by Evison, Jonathan: A lovely, poignant look at the long span of an over 60 year marriage, showing how the two characters have grown with each other and alongside each other.

A reader from Wellesley read *The Heart of Winter* by Jonathan Evison: *The Heart of Winter* alludes to the metaphorical winter of life as well as the hearts of Ruth and Abe Winter. Married for nearly 70 years, Ruth and Abe's life story is told from different points in time over the decades. The challenges and tensions endured by a couple in a long marriage constitute the emotional center of this book. Anyone who has been married will relate to the frustrations whether you are the free spirit or the one who prefers routines, home comforts and familiar people. That said, some of the specifics didn't feel clichéd. The frustrated homemaker and the disconnected workaholic dad are accurate stereotypes but sometimes that also feels stale. There is a pivotal development with one of their children. The development of that child's character seems incomplete. Any family with children can relate to the emotional impact of the event in the story so I do not deny that. However, the event itself feels facile so the story is drained of weight.

A reader from Springfield read *The Heart of Winter* by Jonathan Evison: This is a story of a 60 year long marriage and the troubles and joys that the couple experienced. I enjoyed the read, though I don't feel like it was anything special.

A reader from East Freetown read *The Heart of Winter* by Jonathan Evison: This book takes the reader on a 50+ - year journey into the highs and lows of a marriage. It explores the challenges, heartbreak, and growth that shape a couple and their family.

A reader from LAWRENCE read *The Hogfather* by Terry Pratchett: Loved this book so much! It was the perfect cozy winter read to get me through that post holiday slump!

A reader from Marshfield read *The Holiday Swap* by Maggie Knox: This is a fun, twin-swapping book a la *The Parent Trap*. When one twin gets a concussion, they swap places so that she can recover in a lower stress environment. Unsurprisingly, shenanigans and a little romance ensue. The book takes place at Christmas time, and blizzards and snowy hiking trails play a big role in the plot!

A reader from Rockland read *The Holiday Trap* by Roan Parrish: Queer romance, hanukkah, plants, and fantasy books! Great non traditional Holiday book!

A reader from Tyngsboro read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: I wanted to do *Frozen River*, but had already read it a few months ago. So I picked this which fits perfectly as a book in winter: PLACE: A lodge in the wilderness of the Highlands of Scotland TIME: Between December 30 and January 2 (though the epilogues are later). WHO: 9 friends from university years ago; a couple from Iceland; and 2 employees at the Lodge. - the gamekeeper and the manager. It begins on January 2 with the statement from the Lodge's gamekeeper that "the missing guest" has been found -- "found a body". And an unexpected major snowstorm leaves them unable to get help from outside of the lodge. And thus begins this mystery. And of course we find out there is possibly a serial killer in their vicinity. WHO was found. Neither the name nor the sex of the person is mentioned for a while-- although all present know the who, but not the reader. The book goes back and forth between the arrival on December 30 and January 2, Not everyone is who they first appear to be. Some of them were extremely unlikeable. It was not difficult to keep with the time change and before we find out the WHO, we see how many of the guests have big secrets that are to be discovered along the way. Who can be trusted? The "why: and the "who done it" goes back and forth. Eventually we can separate the good guys from the bad guys. By the end of the book, everything has fallen into place. A few surprises that I missed entirely. I really liked the epilogue. Have to read more by Ms. Foley.

A reader from Belchertown read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: Great winter read. The writing was very atmospheric and I could find myself imagining the snow covered expanse of the remote Scottish Highlands lodge where the book took place.

A reader from Attleboro read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: Great book to start the year!

A reader from Berkley read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: It certainly was a wintery thriller!

A reader from Stoughton read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: Great book to start the year with, especially if you can end it on January 2nd! (if you know, you know)

A reader from Whitman read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: I enjoyed the setting but the pace was a bit slow.

A reader from WOONSOCKET read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: This yearly getaway with a group of old university friends begins in tragedy, and I loved how the author signals from the start what details deserve your attention. The story maintains just enough mystery for a satisfying slow burn all the way to the conclusion. Along the way, I enjoyed speculating about the various character dynamics—yes, some were obvious—but that never diminished my desire to see it through to the end. I only wish the epilogue had gone deeper into a few of the characters' outcomes. Overall, it was a great read that I devoured in two days.

A reader from Northborough read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: I enjoyed the setting of the novel and the characters. The characters flaws come out more and more as the story goes on. I was expecting more of a murder mystery - this had some of that, but more about the characters and relationships. The relationships between the characters seemed less and less likely through the book. It was an entertaining read but not a favorite.

A reader from Wakefield read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: The mystery was engrossing, the story a little depressing (are any friendships meant to last?) and the ending didn't quite satisfy. The descriptions of the snow-covered Scottish wilderness fit the challenge nicely, though.

A reader from Watertown read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: I didn't really enjoy this book - it's a murder mystery set during a blizzard in the Scottish Highlands. A group of old friends come together to celebrate their yearly New Years tradition and tensions rise as they get caught up in hidden sentiments, grudges, and secrets. I thought the characters and the mystery itself were not that interesting or fleshed out - the pacing was very slow, despite the interesting premise. I read this during a very snowy day here in Mass and that set the appropriate mood for reading this book. All in all, I'd give it 2 stars!

A reader from Rockland read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: It was just ok for me. Seemed longer than it should have been, though the twist at end I didn't foresee.

A reader from Reading read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: In typical Lucy Foley fashion, a locked room mystery with a group of characters connected in variety of ways to each other. But the room is an 100 acres estate in Scotland Highlands over New Years Eve in a snowstorm.

A reader from Franklin read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: I really enjoyed this! It kept me guessing, and I liked that the person murdered isn't revealed until the end.

A reader from North Brookfield read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: This book was good, it was a bit slow but definitely had a ton of twists and turns towards the end. I really like this author!

A reader from Braintree read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: When a group of old college friends meets for a reunion in the Scottish Highlands, a snow storm leaves them stranded and forced to face secrets and simmering resentments.

A reader from Foxboro read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: This was an intriguing book about a group of friends that met in college who go on a New Year vacation. They expect a fun new year celebration but when something bad happens everyone is a suspect. The chapters switch between a couple people's perspectives.

A reader from Abington read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: Really enjoyed it. I like a good mystery, and I like Scotland so it was a great combo. Commented to my sister that it felt a little like Murder on the Orient Express, and she didn't disagree.

A reader from Sturbridge read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: A great mystery read about a group of friends who go to an out of the way lodging experience in Scotland. It was really engaging and the ending was definitely surprising! It being set in winter definitely added to the story.

A reader from Mendon read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: My previous submission was for a different book challenge. This book keeps you guessing the entire time and is a murder mystery that flops between the past and present. Takes place on a remote property during a major blizzard. Information slowly gets revealed as you read it. Keeps you hooked!

A reader from Chicopee read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: A group of college friends spends New Year's together in a lodge in the remote Scottish Highlands. When a guest is murdered on the property, and no way for the police to get there in a snowstorm, the guests and owners of the property become entangled in a dangerous game.

A reader from Mansfield read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: A murderer in the midst of a bunch of terrible people. A group of so-called friends rent a secluded hunting cabin to celebrate New Years Eve. Someone ends up murdered. None of the characters were likeable and didn't have any sympathy from me. I have to wonder how many 30-somethings (especially with a baby in tow!) can really pull all nighters like these people did. I didn't love it- it was far fetched and I wasn't really rooting for anyone.

A reader from Methuen read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: a little congested with characters. took me a while to remember who is who & how they all relate to each other. the "mystery" really gets going about halfway through which helps.

A reader from Dracut read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: During Christmas break, a group of friends meet up to vacation together to ring in the New Year...a decade long

tradition. What started out as an innocent vacation turns deadly as resentment and secrets come out.

A reader from Westfield read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: Quite the cast of characters in this book! At first I was a little worried about keeping track of them all, especially with all the alternating chapter perspectives, but it turned out that the personalities were strong enough to quickly make their mark and be more than memorable enough to track. The alternating timeframes right before and right after the murder worked really well to develop the mystery and give hints without revealing too much too early. Although it did feel like the friend group had a little too much drama, it was more of a fictional stretch than an unrealistic one, and I found the two characters at the lodge to be well-developed in ways that helped shape the overall story arc without getting in the way. Definitely a quick read due to being super engaging, and also a welcome change after the last book to have one I wanted to keep reading to find out what happened!

A reader from Duxbury read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: The book was about a group of friends who reunite for a New Year's celebration at an isolated lodge in the Scottish Highlands, only for one of them to be found dead after a blizzard traps them inside. The book was a quick and easy read. I also guessed the twists pretty early on, and wasn't surprised by anything that happened. It definitely didn't make me want to stay in an isolated cabin during a blizzard anytime soon.

A reader from Hopkinton read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: A murder mystery set in the snowstorm trapping a group of old friends in the Scottish highlands where they went to ring in the New Year. Winter weather is certainly a major part of the plot... but the mystery itself is rather blah, I don't like the 'mystery box being mysterious for the sake of mystery' approach. It was well-written, though, so mostly non-irritating.

A reader from Norfolk read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: A great mystery and quick read! I really enjoyed this book to kick off the challenge!

A reader from Brighton read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: I really enjoy mysteries, so I am glad I chose this book. The setting felt perfect for the weather this month. Sometimes multiple perspectives can be confusing, but I think the author navigated them well.

A reader from Mansfield read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: An engaging thriller that kept me turning pages. A group of friends from college meets to celebrate NYE in a remote Scottish estate. Each of them has secrets and one of them ends up dead. The harsh winter landscape separates them from civilization. Could the murderer be one of the them or someone else lurking nearby.

A reader from Auburn read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: Predictable but atmospheric. Engaging writing style. Unlikable characters.

A reader from South Portland read *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley: Perfect read for a snowy January!

A reader from Pepperell read *The Ice Palace* by F. Scott Fitzgerald: Sally Carol experiences the excitement and disillusionment of winter all in one short story. While she initially looks forward to visiting the north, by the end of the story, she is desperate and homesick, returning to what is familiar to her. Her experience in the Ice Palace is much like what we have all experienced in New England at least once: an understanding of the remarkable beauty and, inevitably, a fear of winter's brutality.

A reader from Sharon read *The Ice Palace* by Fitzgerald, F. Scott: F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Ice Palace" is about the collision between dreams and reality and what draws us "home" again. It is a short but descriptive read and the ice palace sounds beautiful!

A reader from Vineyard Haven read *The Ice Schooner* by Micgaek Moorcock: In the far distant future, Earth has become a permanently frozen wasteland. The great cities of the past are the stuff of legend, buried under hundreds of feet of ice. The cities of the present day are nestled at the bottom, or carved into the walls, of deep crevasses, sustained by machines so old that no one now alive has the faintest idea how they work or the ability to make new ones. The cities of the ice – actually city-states, with a vague "generic high fantasy" feeling left the freezing seas and lumbered back onto the land) and polar bears. Trade between them is carried by giant sail-powered, ski-equipped ships known as "ice schooners." Konrad Arflane, a captain without a ship, sets out on foot across the icy wasteland, uncertain about whether he want to live or die and seeking clarity in isolation. There, he encounters an old man – on the verge of death himself – and, for reasons he does not understand himself, shepherds him to safety in the nearest city. That chance encounter sets in motion a chain of events that gives Arflane a new command, and a new purpose in life. Far to the north, it is said, the towers of the long-lost city of New York still protrude above the ice, possibly holding the secret of making the world warm again. It's up to Konrad Arflane to sail there and find it. "The Ice Schooner" is a cheerful triumph of the "rule of cool" over anything that resembles rational world-building. Moorcock sets up a deliciously exotic world – a mashup of 19C clipper ships, Renaissance-era politics, and Viking/Inuit/Lapp costumes – and sets his square-jawed hero loose in it on a classic adventure-story quest straight out of "King Solomon's Mines" or "The Island at the Top of the World." None of it makes the slightest sense, and the world would dissolve like spun sugar in a downpour if you think about it, so . . . don't stop to think about it. Just grab your cutlass, unfurl the topsails, and enjoy the ride.

A reader from Reading read *The Irish Goodbye* by Heather Aimee O'Neill: A family reckoning that takes place during a Thanksgiving snowstorm.

A reader from Watertown read *The Killing Stones* by Ann Cleeve: Scottish islands just before Christmas, dead bodies, family dynamics, terrible weather...great to read between rounds of shoveling.

A reader from Northfield read *The Killing Stones* by Ann Cleeve: Set in mid-December approaching Christmastime in the Orkney - a group of islands north of Scotland. A man is murdered during a gale/winter storm, and the protagonist is in search of the culprit. It's cold and windy and dark and everyone wants the crime solved before Christmas. There are lots of warm cozy fires and tea.

A reader from Boxford read *The Kite Runner* by Hosseini: This emotionally charged novel centers around an incredibly disturbing scene of betrayal that occurred during a winter kite fighting tournament in Kabul, Afghanistan in 1975. It follows two boys from different ethnic groups, and their complex friendship. Ultimately, it is about the narrator, Amir's, journey to confront and redeem himself for his mistakes, which caused severe consequences for his best friend, Hassan.

A reader from North Dartmouth read *The Lake of Dead Languages* by Carol Goodman: About 90% of this book was set during the winter. The titular lake in its frozen state is a main character. The lake is on the property of a girls' school and the lore surrounding it is the object of much fascination among many of the girls, especially the students in the narrator's Latin class. Multiple girls have met their demise by this lake, stretching back to the narrator's past when she was a student at this school. A teacher now, seeing her students' lives in danger, she unravels the secrets of her past roommates and other characters to save her students.

A reader from Melrose read *The Land in Winter* by Andrew Miller: I liked this book but did feel like the 1st half moved slowly.

A reader from Concord read *The Land in Winter* by Andrew Miller: I like character driven and atmospheric books and had never heard of Andrew Miller, but he has written 10 novels, and I look forward to reading more. This was recommended to me by a patron and I started to see it on end of the year lists and it currently has a long hold list in our network. Perfect for the cold icy start to our winter in MA.

A reader from New Bedford read *The Land in Winter* by Andrew Miller: Slow paced character study of two neighboring couples living in England during a brutal winter.

A reader from Wellfleet read *The Land in Winter* by Andrew Miller: Set in the winter of 1962-63 in southeastern England, this book technically qualifies as an historical novel. But it is also a moving story of two couples just starting married life and struggling with their relationships in a time when the rules are changing. These couples grew up during the war and the period after, but things are changing as the sixties begin. They are not sure which rules apply now. I found the women particularly moving because neither is really suited to the wife and mother role that they seem to be stuck with. But neither really knows what is wrong, and both think it is somehow their fault. Both women are pregnant with their first child, and that becomes the bond between them despite their background and class differences. Winter plays a definite role since December of 1962 and January of 1963 was a period that was one of the coldest winters in recent English history. The writing is exquisite. It is as spare as the winter landscape. The book was a finalist for the Booker Prize and certainly deserves that honor.

A reader from Groton read *The Land in Winter* by Andrew Miller: Christmas, early 1960s, small village outside Bristol, England. A massive snowstorm has closed roads, stopped trains and isolated the villagers. In the bitter cold, two neighboring couples try to maintain their daily lives, while dealing with the choices they have made. A character driven novel that will stay with you long after.

A reader from Danvers read *The Land in Winter* by Andrew Miller: Lovely writing. Bits of humor laced throughout a somewhat dreary story. Strength was the setting - relentless, cold, cold winter (as it was while I was reading the book) in the time between the 2nd WW and the chaos of the 60s. I felt I was there. And didn't want to be.

A reader from Swampscott read *The Left Hand of Darkness* by Ursula K. Le Guin: This was a first reread for me, and I'm so glad I gave myself a chance to revisit the story. I'm in awe of how this book from 1969 weaves together discussions of politics, gender, philosophy, humanity, and love in a way that feels utterly timeless and haunting. This is a classic for a reason.

A reader from Marlborough read *The Left Hand of Darkness* by Ursula K. Le Guin: An incredible introduction into Le Guin that examines a society where gender is fluid.

A reader from Weymouth read *The Lightkeepers* by Abby Geny: Interesting story about a photographer on isolated islands off the California coast. An exploration of grief and coping. Worth a read.

A reader from Amherst read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis: I had never read this book, and was pleased to do so. The tale is at once archetypal, the story of children growing up through trials in a magical land. It is simply written, with the twists and turns of

a good story. It is a very quick read, and the first book in the Chronicles of Narnia series. Loyalty and truthfulness are clearly virtues to be held, with caution about the seduction of the dark side.

A reader from Stoneham read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by CS Lewis: Lucy finds the world of Narnia through a wardrobe. Her siblings, Edmund, Peter and Susan soon join her there and they have a fun, magic adventure.

A reader from Worcester read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis: I have only seen the movie once before once entering my adulthood and since I needed a quick read to join this months book club I decided to revisit the audio version of this beloved classic and finally finish the whole Narnia series. Listening to this book made me feel like a small kid again getting ready for a snowday and I really enjoyed that. I love all the talking animals and the beautiful imagery because this is exactly how I played pretend as a kid and I completely understand how this series is a classic.

A reader from Amherst read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S.Lewis: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe centers on four siblings who discover the magical world of Narnia, a land trapped in eternal winter by the White Witch. Their arrival fulfills an ancient prophecy that four humans will help restore balance. Guided by Aslan, the great lion, they learn courage, loyalty, and sacrifice as they fight to free Narnia from tyranny.

A reader from Wareham read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis: Classic fantasy published in 1950. I chose the audio version. Peter, Susan, Lucy and Edmond are relocated during WWII to an old country house and go through the wardrobe to Narnia, the White Witch, and endless winter. It is not only a tale for children...a lot to say to all.

A reader from Worcester read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis: I had read this book about a year ago, and didn't particularly enjoy it, in part because of the small mass – market paperback and tiny print (I realize that now). I found it in large print in a hardcover and enjoyed it more this time. In this VERY cold January, I could particularly empathize with the characters finding themselves at times in snowy conditions without adequate outdoor clothing! After this reading, I'm looking forward to trying the rest of the Chronicles of Narnia. I'm not part of the age group to which this book is targeted - not even close. I am also not a huge fan of fantasy but do read it occasionally. This book was written in 1950 and became the first of seven books in The Chronicles, though there appears to be some dispute about which book of the 7 should be read first. Since I didn't know this at the start, I guess I'll stay with the order in which they were written. In a general sense, this book is about a fight between the forces of good and evil, which might upset some sensitive young readers.

A reader from Framingham read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis: As a reread, this book felt incredibly nostalgic. Comforting to revisit old friends.

A reader from Billerica read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis: A beloved story about what it means to love and to forgive; a classic winter story for all ages.

A reader from Somerville read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis: It was a cute read!

A reader from Dedham read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by CS Lewis: Four children find their way into a magical world where winter reigns eternal with Christmas nowhere in sight. The children work to dismantle an evil queen and restore order to Narnia.

A reader from Seekonk read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by CS Lewis: I have no idea how I never read this before! I've seen the movies, and I know the references. This was every bit as captivating as I expected. I can tell why it's been a children's classic for so long. In this world, we are all Peter, Edmund, Susan, or Lucy. We will fight for Narnia—and for Aslan!

A reader from Boxborough read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis: "The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe" is the quintessential winter book, reminding readers of the contrast between the warmth and cold, the comfort of home* and the uncertainty of visiting foreign lands, and friends and strangers. (* Even when home is someplace new.) I had picked out a few other books to read for the Massachusetts Center for the Book's January reading challenge-- and read those as well!-- but when I saw this book on the recommended reading list, knew that this would be my official entry as fitting for the season. Prepare a cup of tea, a warm blanket, and a window view of the snow outside as you crack open the cover and prepare to meet these legendary characters.

A reader from Belmont read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by CS Lewis: This was a fun and short read. It explores themes of friendship, trust, courage, and sacrifice. I particularly enjoyed watching the four Pevensie children develop a deeper trust for each other and to work together to defeat the evil white witch and the perpetual cold of Narnia.

A reader from northampton read *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis.

A reader from Mansfield read *The Lodge* by Kayla Olson: What a fun winter read! It takes place in Vermont, has rockstars, romance, mystery all in one! A very fun and quick read!

A reader from E Freetown read *The Long Winter* by Laura Ingalls Wilder: This was an enjoyable book to read. It was well written and describes a particularly hard winter for a family on the frontier. It shows how resourceful one can be when necessary.

A reader from Tewksbury read *The Long Winter* by Laura Ingalls Wilder: Nostalgic book about surviving the long winter with minimal supplies.

A reader from Lexington read *The Lost Hosue* by Melissa Larsen: This is a mystery set in Iceland where the granddaughter of a man who is believed to have murdered his wife and infant and then fled to the United States solves the crime after his death. The setting is a crucial element in the story-Iceland in February makes our current cold snap look balmy.

A reader from Beverly read *The Lost Pianos of Siberia* by Sophy Roberts: A delightful book of travel, landscape, culture, history and music.

A reader from Vineyard Haven read *The Love Haters* by Katherine Center: Good beach read.

A reader from Boston read *The Magnolia Palace* by Fiona Davis: Mystey mixed with historical fiction about a museum in NYC famous for art. Dual timeline with two women who are models.

A reader from Weymouth read *The Maid* by Nita Prose: Nice murder mystery with a unique "detective". This was a re-read for me, but an enjoyable one. This book is now a series, with at least two more entries. Perhaps I'll check them out....

A reader from Cambridge read *the mating game* by lana Ferguson: This was such a fun romance read! I loved the twist of the FMC not knowing she was a shifter it really added to her character development. I also loved the connection to the fake mate (lanas other shifter book). It was subtle but perfect for people who loved the first one!

A reader from Medfield read *The Mating Game* by Lana Ferguson: A paranormal romance (wolf shifters!)

A reader from West Bridgewater read *The Mating Game* by Lana Ferguson: *The Mating Game* by Lana Ferguson is the second book in a shifter romance series. It is set in the snowy landscape of a small town in Colorado. Main character Tess discovers she's not as human as she thought and has to suddenly come to terms with that while on the job - renovating a rundown lodge with her brothers. There, she encounters the grumpy owner Hunter Barrett who seems to know her secret. I finished this book during a snowstorm. While hoping the power would stay on for me, the characters in this book lost theirs for 3 days! It felt like a very appropriate read as I watched more and more snow fall. Overall it is a cute wintery read for fans of romance and paranormal stories.

A reader from North easton read *The Mercies* by Kiran Millwood Hargrave: Taking place in 1619 in a northern tip village of Norway, a way of life is threatened when almost every man of Maren's village, including her father, brother, and fiancée, are drowned in a storm. The women must learn to survive by themselves but are threatened when male leadership sends their best after Sami natives, starting witch trials in 17th century Norway. Interesting read to see the differences, and similarities, in these trials versus the Salem Witch Trials.

A reader from Belchertown read *The Merry Matchmaker* by Sheila Roberts: A modern holiday take on Jane Austen's "Emma", it was an easy winter read.

A reader from Beverly read *The Moon of the Winter Bird* by Jean Craighead George: Sweet little story about the life of a sparrow in the winter.

A reader from Melrose read *The Moon of the Winter Bird* by Jean Craighead George: Read this with my nephew! We both enjoyed this lovely tale of a little sparrow finding himself wintering the season over.

A reader from Plymouth read *The Most Wonderful Crime Of The Year* by Ally Carter: I know it's past Christmas but this still fit the "winter" prompt, and I love anything by Ally Carter. True to form this is a fun, quick read, with an engaging level of suspense AND romcom energy.

A reader from Northampton read *The Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie: a classic!

A reader from DORCHESTER CENTER read *The Netanyahus* by Joshua Cohen: This book was unexpectedly wonderful! Kind of like a well written train wreck. I couldn't look away!!

A reader from Cambridge read *The Nightmare Before Kissmass* by Sara Raasch: I'm not usually a rom-com person so when I say I'm kind of surprised how much I like this book I mean it. There's a good amount of plot in there. Nice blend of heavy and light themes and the character development is very good. Overall and incredibly enjoyable book.

A reader from Medfield read *The North Wind* by Alexandria Warwick: Ive had this book for awhile but the 615pg length was a bit daunting. Finally read it and really enjoyed it. The affection between Boreas and Wren developed naturally, albeit slowly. Starting only at around 45% did their relationship start developing into more than hate. Due to the length, the story was a bit drawn out, but nevertheless, I really enjoyed it and Boris was so wholesome and I enjoyed the epilogue

A reader from Groveland read *The Once and Future Queen* by Paula Lafferty: Excellent reimagining of Camelot, it being winter is a major point of the story.

A reader from Worcester read *The Orient Express* by Agatha Christie: I knew the story well from countless movies and television adaptations, but I realized that I'd never actually read the book myself. When I spied it on my shelf, I picked it as this month's topic. Nothing like being trapped on an opulent train, in the middle of Europe, with Ms. Christie's acerbic wit, via M. Poirot, to warm the winter night. Great start to the year!

A reader from Woburn read *The Overnight Guest* by Heather Gudenkauf: Our book club gave it a mixed rating. Most were 2 or three stars. It was easy to get through. Some aspects of the book didn't seem to fit the story.

A reader from Lakeville read *The Overnight Guest* by Heather Gudenkauf: Interesting murder mystery

A reader from Rockland read *The Overnight Guest* by Heather Gudenkauf: I love a multiple timeline story!

A reader from Waltham read *The Overnight Guest* by Heather Gudenkauf: The book flips between three perspectives: a true crime writer at an isolated farmhouse finds a child in the snow in present day, a grisly double murder in the same farmhouse twenty years before, and a mysterious mother and daughter held captive in a basement at an unknown period of time. Very atmospheric and suspenseful.

A reader from Weymouth read *The Passengers on the Hankyu Line* by Hiro Arikawa: Really sweet story consisting of interconnected tales of several people riding on a particular train line in Japan. Easy to read with a nice flow.

A reader from newbedford read *The penguin book of Christmas stories* by jessica harrison, ed.: Varied collection of short stories set at Christmas time, from a wide selection of internationally known writers of quality. Many genres and nationalities represented.

A reader from Sandwich read *The Pleasures of Wintering* by Erin Longhurst: This book can inspire one given the frigid winter we in the Northeast are enduring. The visuals one sees can enhance the creative process. Listenings, touchings & tastings of winter one experiences can bring a peacefulness and warming joy. Many exquisite photos thru out!

A reader from Charlestown read *The Private Patient* by P.D. James: It's only appropriate that James close out her 14-book Dalgliesh series with a manor house murder in mid-December, that last, desperate rush of the year just before the holidays and liminal period thereafter. I finished *The Private Patient* in a similar mindset, just at the close of this month which has seemed paradoxically to both drag on interminably and now, in retrospect, gone by in a flash. Her writing, as always, delighted. The novel is an absolute masterclass, populating Cheverell Manor with incredibly human characters, both the returning team of detectives and new cast of suspects, who follow an intriguing plot to a comprehensive and comprehensible resolution. James is singular for her interplay with tropes of the genre, invoking much-needed originality, and the insightful moral and social commentary she weaves flawlessly into her novels through the thoughts of her characters. She competes only with herself. And, while not my favorite of the Dalgliesh novels, *The Private Patient* delivered a perfectly poignant end to an excellent series, in my view the best (crime) writing

by large margin. What greater compliment can I bestow on the detective and his authoress than to say: I will miss them terribly.

A reader from Beverly Hills read *The Quality of Silence* by Rosamund Lupton: Deep in the unrelenting darkness of the Alaskan winter, Yasmin and her deaf daughter have flown to celebrate Christmas with their husband and father, Matt, only to be told he has perished in a fire. But has he? And who are these creepy men they've met?

A reader from Whitinsville read *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy: 4/5 stars

A reader from Hanover read *The Rush* by Beth Lewis: The lives of three women converge during the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898. Kate (from Kansas) travels to the Klondike to learn about mining investments, but really is interested in finding her older sister, Molly. Martha, a hotel owner employs Molly as a prostitute. Ellen is married to a ne'er do well husband Charlie. The murder of Molly brings the three women together to solve the murder. In the book, the author describes vividly the snow, avalanches and weather conditions that must be taken into consideration for travel and work.

A reader from Cambridge read *The Salvage* by Anbara Salam: *The Salvage* follows marine archaeologist Marta Koury in the harsh winter of 1962 as she excavates the remains and belongings of Captain James Purdie from his ship near a small Scottish island. Purdie's legacy, and maybe his ghost, haunts the story and our protagonist. This started out strong for me with gothic imagery and a strong setting, but fizzled a little towards the end as Marta's quest for answers becomes more convoluted. However, I enjoyed the read and it was a good fit for January.

A reader from Salem read *The Salvage* by Anbara Salam: Eerie and beautifully evocative with rich descriptions, Anbara Salam delivers an intriguing mystery. The writing is so eloquent that I found myself shivering in sympathy for the characters as they deal with strange happenings under mounds of snow.

A reader from Weymouth read *The Sanatorium*: A remote hotel in the Swiss Alps, previously a sanatorium, is the perfect back drop for suspense and mystery. The main character, Elin Warner, a detective on leave. An invitation to celebrate her brother's engagement turns into an investigation to discover why guests and staff are going missing. The suspense begins from page 1 and never lets up. I highly recommend!!!

A reader from West Brookfield read *The Sanatorium* by Sarah Pearse: Book was recommended by 2 coworkers at my Library. It kept me guessing until the end. A good thriller for a snowy weekend.

A reader from Somerville read *The Sanatorium* by Sarah Pearse: Set in a hotel with a sketchy past in the Swiss alps, *The Sanatorium* was the perfect murder mystery to read during this year's snowstorm. Overall I would describe it as a chilling thriller, and the snow definitely played a main character!

A reader from West Brookfield read *The Sanatorium* by Sarah Pearse: A great mystery. Unpredictable. It will keep you on the edge of your seat.

A reader from Abington read *The Sanatorium* by Sarah Pearse: A well written popular (Reese Witherspoon Book Club awarded) psychological thriller creepier than most novels I have read in this genre and set high up in the mountains of Switzerland. With the most well known of architects as main characters and their fans. *The Sanatorium* begins with Elin, the protagonist detective on leave at a newly renovated hotel. The elite group are together during the long awaited opening of this hotel renovated by one of Switzerland's premier and most famous architects who saw potential in this former hospital or sanatorium and treatment center for those dying from tuberculosis. The architects are present this weekend together celebrating the new hotel opening when Elin still deciding to go back to police work or not, gains permission to investigate a seemingly gory and tortuous murder after a body is discovered among the snow outside. The weekend was meant for Elin to reconnect with her brother who invited her and her partner, Will, to this private, difficult to get to, boutique hotel because of his new fiancé, a former best friend of Elin with whom she also lost touch with, want to celebrate their engagement. The new hotel complete with spas, majestic outdoor blizzard views, and housed Tuberculosis patients decades ago is already controversial, with protesters believing the architect and staff never should have renovated this deserted and decaying spot. Elin is a private person already, even more private after her and her brother witnessed childhood trauma after the death of their youngest brother- with whom Elin cannot correctly remember the order of the events that led to her youngest brothers deaths, however secretly suspected the middle brother as the one to kill him, transforming three sibling family to a two sibling one overnight. Just when an avalanche causes the outside world along with the police to abandon the hotel, guests, and staff is the dismembered body found. The murders pile up committed by an ominous figure wearing a gas mask but with a tube replacing the vent that goes from mouth to nose. Highly recommend! I live in Abington MA and in Harlem NYC and was witnessing a snow storm while reading this thriller! Something about being reminded of the vastness and danger of weather makes me feel reverent to this land as people tried to shovel out their cars. I felt scared turning the page and ironically needed to visit the Emergency Room one day redecorating my bedroom in NYC! I healed nicely after a 7 stitch gash thanks to NY Presbyterian staff. Also thanks to Sarah Pearse for a great novel and reminding me to plan for and respect winter. I love this challenge so far!

A reader from Leominster read *The Sea in Winter* by Christine Day: Middle-grade fiction about a young Makah/Piscataway girl and her mental health journey after being injured dancing ballet. I appreciated the Native history and the family bonds in this novel. An excellent read for adults as well as middle-grade kids.

A reader from Ashburnham read *The Secret Christmas Library* by Jenny Colgan: A mystery; with a castle, wild countryside and a budding romance. A great winter Sunday on the couch read!

A reader from Ipswich read *The Secret History* by Donna Tartt: The description of winter in Vermont as something beautiful, terrifying, and insanity-inducing resonated with me as someone whose depression is often amplified by seasonal affective disorder. I also liked how, after the climax, the evidence was hidden by a fresh snowfall, mirroring the students' pristine appearances which help protect them from suspicion.

A reader from Amherst read *The Secret of Secrets* by Dan Brown: Set in winter in Prague - some scenes make you reach for a blanket!

A reader from Feeding Hills read *The Secret of Snow* by Viola Shipman: This was a beautiful story of not letting the past define you.

A reader from Amherst read *The Secret of Snow* by Viola Shipman: The story takes a woman back to her hometown in Michigan to try to rebuild her life. She finds new friends and works through old trauma all during winter festival that makes me wish to visit Michigan in the winter!

A reader from Springfield read *The Shining* by Stephen King: I have watched the Stanley Kubrick movie too many times to count, and I watched the TV miniseries once. But I never read the original book. Since the public already knows the story through the media, I don't need to write that the setting is a remote, grand hotel during a Colorado winter. It is most appropriate for an after-Christmas read in Massachusetts. In fact, I think there is a Vermont landmark mentioned in the book that really belongs in Massachusetts. But I digress. I loved reading this book. I have only a vague memory of the miniseries. But through that version and through reading about the author, I knew that alcoholism was a major theme. King shows through his imaginative storytelling what it can do to a person's soul. Anyone who has experience either with alcohol addiction themselves, or who was close to an alcoholic (which is everyone) can identify with this theme. Another theme is grief. Which ties along with alcoholism, because you can grieve for the person you once knew. Even the main character, the alcoholic, is grieving his past and his mistakes. For those of you, like me, who never read the book but know the movie well, the ending IS different. That's all I will say. Oh, I will also say there are ghosts and hauntings.

A reader from Medford read *The Shining* by Stephen King: *The Shining* revolves around the Torrence family. Jack, an alcoholic with a temper, has been fired from his teaching job and sees his winter caretaker position at the Overlook Hotel as his last chance to prove himself and care for his wife and son. As the isolation of winter in the mountains of Colorado sets in, their son Danny begins to experience strange happenings due to his latent psychic abilities and is shown progressively more violent visions by his imaginary friend Tony. Winter draws closer and while nature sleeps the Overlook wakes, sinking its claws deeper into the Torrence family in an attempt to keep them forever. This was my first experience with Stephen King and I enjoyed it! While it's clear the book was written in the 70s and some language and ideas are a bit outdated, the building suspense in the second half of the book kept me hooked until the end. Filled with symbolism and foreshadowing, this was overall a good read.

A reader from Mashpee read *The Shining* by Stephen King: *The Shining* deserves all the praise it's ever gotten. I loved the pace of the book and found that even at 600+ pages I never wanted to take a break from it or got tired of the story. The characters were fantastic (both good and bad), I especially liked Dick Hallorran and the hedge animals. Very much looking forward to reading *Doctor Sleep*.

A reader from Foxboro read *The Shining* by Stephen King: I chose *The Shining*, because I knew Stephen King notoriously hated the movie adaptation, and I wanted to finally read the source material. Apparently, I, too, was led astray, because most of this book happens before winter (the climax takes place in early December). However, the book does center around Jack Torrance, a WINTER caretaker for the dark and foreboding Overlook Hotel in Colorado. As Jack tries to use this opportunity to mend his life and his family in the wake of his battle with alcoholism, his son, Danny, grapples with his burgeoning psychic abilities, abilities the hotel's sinister spirits are desperate to possess. While the book leans into the horror genre, it is just as much about a man struggling with addiction, and how it affects himself and those around him, the guilt and shame of it only exacerbated by the isolation of the hotel in the off-season. I'm glad I finally got to read it (even if it wasn't a perfect fit for this prompt, in the end).

A reader from Franklin read *The Shining* by Stephen King: The quintessential winter book! I love both the book and the movie but really think of them as two separate stories. If you've only seen the movie, I highly recommend still reading the book. Jack Torrance is a much more developed and complicated character and the hotel's grip on his sanity is much more gradual, adding to the suspense and terror. One of my favorites and I was happy to reread it.

A reader from Malden read *The Shining* by Stephen King: A chilling winter read. I can understand why King didn't love the Kubrick adaptation, but I think they are both solid in their own way. Really enjoyed Dick Hallorann as a character!

A reader from SPRINGFIELD read *The shining* by Stephen King: Poor Jack.

A reader from Malden read *The Shining* by Stephen King: I'm so happy I went into this without seeing the movie. This was a pretty terrifying read, and reading this during the winter time (and finishing the end during a massive snowstorm) was the perfect setting/vibe!

A reader from Holyoke read *The Shining* by Stephen King: honestly, i thought this book was just okay. i've never been a huge fan of stephen king in general but i just keep trying anyway. i was more than a little turned off by the 16 racial slurs said in the last third of the book.

A reader from Chicopee read *The Shining* by Stephen King: I have loved the movie and the mini series since I was a kid but never read the book until now. So exciting to see how different the book is compared to the film adaptation. Living in New England the description of the insane amount of snowfall in Colorado was easily something I could envision. Definitely recommend this one to any King fans like myself.

A reader from Bellingham read *The Shining* by Steven King: This is a psychological horror novel about aspiring author Jack, his wife Wendy, and their young son Danny with psychic abilities who move into a luxurious Summer time resort in Boulder Colorado as the off season caretaker. As the days grow shorter and heavy snow slowly cuts the family off from the outside world, the hotel's dark and supernatural forces prey on Jack's fragile sense of ego and self driving him toward violence, committing unforgivable acts of evil.

A reader from Northampton read *The Shuddering* by Ania Ahlborn: A group of friends goes to the mountains for a relaxing getaway, only to find they aren't the only ones out there. A chilling, supernatural horror.

A reader from Amesbury read *The silent patient* by Alex michaelides: It was intense.

A reader from Beverly read *The Sisters of the Winter Wood* by Rena Rossner: Interesting Grimm Fairy tale meets 1700's Ukrainain Jewish Community story.

A reader from Wellesley read *The Sisters of the Winter Wood* by Rena Rossner: Rossner does an excellent job of placing the reader in a Jewish village community in historical Ukraine in this novel. The weaving of history and folk tales is interesting, though one of the characters' patriarchy drove me crazy. That's just being true to the history, though, right?

A reader from Arlington read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: I loved this book! It was recommended by a friend who read it before she took a trip to Alaska. The way the author describes the cold and quiet throughout the book made me feel like I was there too. Loved the character development and the flow of the story too.

A reader from Oak Bluffs read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: A fairy tale set in turn of the 20th century Alaska. Both of the main characters are likable and feel authentic. The landscape resonates deeply with the characters lives.

A reader from Clinton read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: This novel was my book club's pick, and I was thrilled to see that it also fit the bill for January's challenge! I wasn't expecting to love this book even a fraction as much as I did. I read it in two sittings - just couldn't put it down!

A reader from Leicester read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: This month I read *The Snow Child*, which is a retelling of *The Snow Maiden*! The writing was beautiful but honestly I found the book a bit slow, but I'm glad I read it and it's been on my TBR for years.

A reader from Southampton read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: "The Snow Child" is a story that I first encountered through a children's book adaptation written by Freya Littledale. At the time, I was unaware that this version was actually derived from the novel authored by Eowyn Ivey. The narrative itself is deeply rooted in the Russian folk tale of Snegurochka, the Snow Maiden. Eowyn Ivey's writing style is remarkable for its ability to capture the reader's emotions from the very first page all the way to the end. Her storytelling immerses the audience in the experiences and feelings of the characters, making the journey both heartfelt and memorable. The narrative takes place in Alaska during the 1920s, a setting that brings to life the enchanting and atmospheric nature of the story. Against this backdrop of snow and wilderness, the plot centers on a couple who are unable to have children. In their longing and hope, they sculpt a child out of snow, and to their amazement, the snow child transforms into a living, mysterious girl named Faina. This magical occurrence becomes the heart of their journey and shapes the emotional landscape of the tale. A heartwarming and magical tale! A must read!

A reader from Boston read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: Devastatingly beautiful. Achingly slow in the best way. I was initially skeptical that the fairy tale premise would be enough to sustain a novel of this length, but the length is really what made it what it is. The story is given time to breathe, and the reader is given time to savor the slow growth of Faina's relationship with the characters. The descriptions of winter and nature and the seasons and Alaskan wilderness are so complete and rich with specific details that bring it to life. My heart hurt.

A reader from Malden read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: A couple moves to Alaska to start a new life after the loss of their child. During the first snowfall of the year they spontaneously build a snowman. The next day the snowman is gone but a mysterious little girl appears in the woods and their lives are never the same again. This book beautifully captures the feelings of grief and hope. And although there are some fairy-tale-ish elements to the story, it really is grounded in reality and all the good and bad that comes with it.

A reader from Boxford read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: I've had this book on my radar for awhile and January seemed like the perfect time to immerse myself in a possibly magical snow-covered forest. I loved how the harsh winters of Alaska were brought to life in the descriptions of the unrelenting weather and dangers of wildlife, as well as the beauty of the snow and the animal tracks left there. Even the indoor scenes were full of vivid descriptions of sewing and preserving jams and enjoying hot pancakes. I loved seeing the character relationships slowly shift and evolve over the course of the many years the book covers.

A reader from Concord read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: This was a lovely, calm story of a 1920's couple making their way in Alaska as a fresh start after the loss of a child. In the cold, snowy woods in which they make their homestead, they rediscover joy in nature, the help of neighbors and their magical meeting of a child that makes an appearance in their lives ... imprinting on their hearts for good. A deceptively simple tale with lovely, hopeful layers of what it means to be human.

A reader from Attleboro read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: A very compelling version of a fairy tale come true. The author did a wonderful job of setting the scene in Alaska with a husband and wife who had moved there to homestead. Ivey's ability to weave elements of fantasy with reality hooked me in along with her descriptive characters and setting. Winter was a central character to the story and I could feel the cold and the snowflakes as the characters dealt with long winters and short days. Lovely story - I highly recommend!

A reader from New Bedford read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: I loved the development of the main characters and their relationship. I also really enjoyed the vivid description of the scenery!

A reader from Arlington read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: This is a perfect winter read, set in rural Alaska in the 1920s. I loved the surprisingly seamless blend of reality and fairy tale.

A reader from Dedham read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: This story of life in Alaska in the 1920's was captivating, making it hard to put down. The middle aged childless couple build

a snow girl who mysteriously comes to life. It's a blend of a fairy tale and the story of a hard, isolating life. The description of the scenery, the wildlife, the snow - it's magical and so vivid. I could see it in my mind. It was not a book that I would have normally picked up, but I'm so glad I did. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

A reader from East Bridgewater read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: This is a beautifully written, and read (I listened on audio), tale that takes place in Alaska in the 1920's on a remote homestead. There are several wonderful characters and it's a story of love and loss. There are fantastical elements, but they are in character for life on the edge of survival in an unforgiving land. I tried other books for this month's selection, including one I hadn't at first realized I'd read before by Isabel Allende. As much as I enjoyed that book a second time, this became the book that epitomized the winter landscape. I highly recommend it for anyone.

A reader from Melrose read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: Beautiful book on love, friendship and found family. Enjoyed the fairy tale aspect. "In my old age, I see that life itself is often more fantastic and terrible than the stories we believed as children, and that perhaps there is no harm in finding magic among the trees."

A reader from Gloucester read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: This book was recommended by Arwen from the Bookstore of Gloucester. How ironic i finish it on a day we are getting many inches of snow. What a wonderful read, captivating from the first sentence. Just beautiful and am very sad i have finished it. Will look for more if Eowyns books. Everyone one should read it if you haven't already.

A reader from NORTH ANDOVER read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: A beautifully written book based on the Russian fairytale of the Snow Maiden. Set in the 1920s on an Alaskan homestead, the book is remarkable in its detailed portrayal of the beauty and ferocity of the Alaskan life and landscape.

A reader from Springfield read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: A fairy tale for grown ups. A magical story with endearing characters set in Alaska, making it a perfect book for these snowy winter days.

A reader from Cohasset read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: This was the first snowy winter read. Beautifully written and magical.

A reader from Osterville read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: I have always loved the children's story, *The Snow Child*, as retold by Freya Littledale. The illustrations have stayed in my mind for nearly 40 years - they are breathtaking. I was curious to read an adult novel based on the same storyline and am glad that I did. The lives portrayed are poignant, often gut wrenching in the grief of loss yet there is always the underlying (often bittersweet)

promise of hope. I was able to be pulled into the Alaskan frontier of the 1920s - history, traditions, expectations - that I was unfamiliar with.

A reader from Cranston read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: This book definitely fit the theme for this month, because it was set in the snowy Alaskan frontier. The descriptions of winter in the beautiful but harsh landscape were vividly written. This book describes a struggle to not only survive in a difficult situation but also find moments of joy and love.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: A childless couple trying to make a new life in Alaska meet a young girl who appears to arrive with the first snow. There's a bit of magical realism and a little ambiguity as to the girl's existence and life.

A reader from Longmeadow read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: *The Snow Child* is a reimagining of a Russian fairytale. It takes place in the 1920's and deals with the heartbreak of miscarriage and infertility as Jack and Mabel try to create a new home in the Alaskan wilderness. Between some friendly neighbors and a little magic, they learned to live again.

A reader from Spokane read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: Set on a homestead in 1920s Alaska centered around a couple and a mysterious child who appears from the snow.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: A well written, heartfelt story. The characters were genuine and the author had enough playful fantasy in there to make you question this snow child. I really enjoyed the story.

A reader from Beverly read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: This book was a challenge for me, it was not something I would typically gravitate towards. It took me a while to get into it but was able to enjoy most of the story. There were some really sweet parts but also some really tough parts and the ending was hard for me to get behind even though I understood it. I am glad I picked this book to stretch my reading comfort zone.

A reader from North Chelmsford read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: Beautifully written. Joyous and bright in its happy moments and quiet and profound in the sad ones. I could feel Mabel's feelings as though they were my own.

A reader from Albuquerque read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: Nature is both beautiful and implacable, seasons change, new beings burst into life as others fizzle out. *The Snow Child* captured the complexity, danger, awe, and beauty of winter, following an old couples life in the Alaskan frontier, sprinkled with magic throughout.

A reader from Salisbury read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: Loved this book.

A reader from Milton read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: *The Snow Child* is magical book about grief, healing, and hope. Just like Jack and Mabel, Ivey wrote the character Faina as

mysterious and loveable character, that had me turning the page fast to find out what happens next.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: I loved the combination of fairy tale, realistic fiction and historical fiction. It felt cozy, mysterious and informative all at the same time. I might not have picked up this book if it weren't for the challenge, but I ended up loving it.

A reader from Belchertown read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: This book has some of the most beautiful descriptions of grief and love I've ever read. It describes parental love, romantic love, love between community and friends. I absolutely loved it.

A reader from Milton read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: A lonely tale, told from the perspective of the wife of a frontierswoman, born in Ohio and transplanted to remote Alaska to farm. A startling real and beautiful tale of faithfulness through the ups and downs of marriage over the years, as each partner in the couple grows, mellows, works, accepts, ages, heals, and changes. Grieving the loss of their stillborn child, they accept and love a wild girl orphan, and a neighbor's youngest son under their roof. The comings and goings that mark human life bring the deepest sorrows and greatest joys humans can experience—elegantly written, with vivid descriptions of winter and landscape that stop in time for the reader to feel their starkness. A real January book.

A reader from Chelmsford read *The Snow Goose* by Paul Gallico: A short, sad, sweet story.

A reader from Acton read *The Snow Lies Deep* by Paula Munier: This is the 6th book in the Mercy Carr mystery series. I didn't like it as much as I liked the other books in the series, but I didn't figure out the mystery by myself which is a plus. Mercy is ex-military police with a retired military dog named Elvis. The series is set in VT where I lived for 45 years and that makes it interesting to me. The other characters in the book are interesting and eccentric as well, which I also like.

A reader from Melrose read *The Snow Queen* by Hans Christian Andersen: A terrific short read to start off this challenge!

A reader from Ludlow read *The Snow Queen* by Joan D. Vinge: I don't normally read sci-fi, but this was excellent! Lots of strong female characters, an intriguing world, an exciting plot. I'm glad there are more in the series - looking forward to reading the next book!

A reader from North Attleboro read *The Snowdonia Killings* by Simon McCleave: I chose this book because of the name and the picture on the cover of a snowy mountainous area. However there wasn't much about winter. This mystery thriller is set in Wales with the backdrop of the Snowdonia snow-peaked mountain range. Detective Ruth decides to

transfer from busy London to a quiet little town in Wales. Unfortunately when she arrives, there are two murders back to back which she must solve with her sidekick and alcoholic partner Nick. Great great book! Surprise twist at the ending. Can't wait to read His other books.

A reader from Lowell read *The Snowman*: A good thriller. Also its character building is really well done.

A reader from Acushnet read *The Spirit* by Thomas Page: A hidden gem of a Bigfoot novel set in a wintery mountain blizzard.

A reader from Franklin read *The Spy Coast* by Tess Gerritsen: How do retired spies spend their retirement? What happens when a former case resurfaces and they are pulled back into their former lives? Tess Gerritsen spins a tale addressing this and more!

A reader from South Yarmouth read *The Spy Coast* by Tess Gerritsen: Excellent thriller! Well developed characters, backstory nicely woven in, surprise ending. Would recommend to Book Clubs.

A reader from East Longmeadow read *The Starless Sea* by Erin Morgenstern: I didn't know what I wanted to read for this month, but this book was on the list of recommendations and I'm so glad that I found it! In a weird way, it reminded me of the movie *Everything Everywhere All At Once* but better. It is a fantastical journey of adventure, self-discovery, and storytelling through a magical underground world that defies description. I love how the different layers of the story are woven together, and I couldn't help thinking of the Owl King when I was awoken last night by a pair of owls talking to each other outside my bedroom.

A reader from Sidney read *The Starless Sea* by Erin Morgenstern: Firstly, if doing the audiobook, definitely up the speed. 1x is like molasses. Secondly, it wasn't until about a third of the way into the book (The Inn at the End of the World chapter specifically), that I started to remotely enjoy the book. It was about 2/3 of the way through when I was starting to be glad I was reading it. I am happy to have read it, even though I would largely say I didn't enjoy reading it. I think a second reading would be helpful, but the first half was like walking through sludge for me. Perhaps another time or with other people, it would be a better fit. I did enjoy some of the stories and I did enjoy some of the writing. Some beautiful sentences to ponder and quote. I also enjoyed the seemingly meta-sentences such as: "...next to a deck of cards that would tell him the whole story if he laid them out in the proper order." Some specifics I did not enjoy: the insta-love relationships. I wanted more reason for why characters were drawn to each other. I also did not understand why Allegra so violently keeps people from accessing the doors. It really feels unreasonable. Some

liked quotes: "I think the whole story has meaning but I also think to have a whole story-shaped story it needs some sort of resolution. Not even a resolution. Some appropriate place to leave it. A goodbye. I think the best stories feel like they're still going somewhere out in story space." "But this is not where their story ends. Their story is only just beginning. And no story ever truly ends as long as it is told."

A reader from Middleboro read *The Starless Sea* by Erin Morgenstern: I really enjoyed Morgenstern's "The Night Circus" and had high hopes for this book. Liked many parts of it but it was kind of all over the place. Absolutely in awe of Morgenstern's imagination and the detailed descriptions of places she conjures up.

A reader from Watertown read *The Starless Sea* by Erin Morgenstern: This book is much more like a fairytale than I expected, but I did enjoy it. It is set in winter; however, since most of it takes place in an underground world it did not feel like a winter book.

A reader from Norton read *The Starless Sea* by Erin Morgenstern: A different book than I would normally pick up, but enjoyable. It had a very Miyazaki quality to it.

A reader from Peabody read *The Starless Sea* by Erin Morgenstern: A high concept book about winter, books, fairy tales, and with a heavy hand of symbolism. A good book overall but a slow burn and a book that requires some re-reading to fully grasp.

A reader from Oxford read *The Starless Sea* by Erin Morgenstern: Wow. Very absorbing fantasy perfect for the dead of winter!

A reader from Haldey read *The Starless Sea* by Erin Morgenstern: I really enjoyed this book! I have to be honest and say that I got very confused at (many) points because I'm not used to stories inside stories inside stories but overall it was a great read. The friendships were lovely and I really loved my guy Zachary Ezra Rawlins. I think I will read another one of Erin's books :)

A reader from Hadley read *The Starless Sea* by Erin Morgenstern: Five stars! I really enjoyed this book, the prose and just overall vibes were immaculate. There is so much to take from it and I'm excited to read it again and connect all the pieces I missed. *The Starless Sea* is a compilation of short stories all interconnected, through Time and Fate, into one overarching story that will keep you intrigued and keep your mind busy.. yet relaxed. Hits you right in a cozy part of your heart, yet rips it out.

A reader from Peabody read *The Starless Sea* by Erin Morgenstern: This is my second Erin Morgenstern book. She has a way of weaving multiple stories together that makes you wonder how they will come together. But, they always come together perfectly at the end.

A reader from Auburn read *The Stranger* by Kiersten Modglin: Kiersten Modglin's "The Stranger" is a fast-paced little thriller that centers on our two main characters, Tibby and Walker, who meet by chance in the middle of a nasty snowstorm. They decide to travel together, only to end up at a sketchy roadside motel, where it seems their problems are only just beginning. This was a quick, fun read, and it had a twist I didn't quite see coming. Compulsively readable for sure!

A reader from MARSHFIELD read *The Stupidest Angel: A Heartwarming Tale of Christmas Terror* by Christopher Moore: I started this at Christmas time, but there was a lot going on so I've only recently finished it. This 3rd installment of the Pine Cove series has familiar characters, but can be read without reading the first two (Practical Demonkeeping and The Lust Lizard of Melancholy Cove). An angel named Raziel (previously in Moore's novel Lamb) is sent to Earth to grant the wish of a child; he decides to help a boy who had witnessed the death of a man dressed as Santa Claus. This book is perfect for anyone who loves fruit bats, zombies, and community Christmas celebrations.

A reader from North Andover read *The Tea Party in the Woods* by Akiko Miyakoshi: This was selected for a picture book chat at the Stevens Memorial Library. My son had read it, but we missed the meetup. I read this right before we returned it. I liked the simple style of the illustrations, and especially liked how the limited touches of color on the protagonist overflowed into the rest of the scene. It is unclear if the animals are real, imagined, or something in between, but they are drawn with loving detail that brings them to life. I liked the message that you are never really alone in the forest (though it can be read in multiple ways, some uplifting, others terrifying). I like to think the moral is to be brave and courteous and those around you will do the same, even if that is perhaps a little bit of a naive outlook on life.

A reader from Rockland read *The terror* by Dan Simmons: Very slow during the first half but as you get near the end impossible to put down.

A reader from Everett read *The Terror* by Dan Simmons: Chilling in more ways than one. The supernatural element enhanced the real-life horror of the situation, it didn't detract or distract.

A reader from Rockland read *The Terror* by Dan Simmons: Overall this was a pretty good book but it was longer than it needed to be and boring at times.

A reader from Somerville read *The Titans Curse* by Rick Riordan: Re-read after watching season 2 of Percy Jackson and the Olympians. Can't wait for season 3!

A reader from Milford read *The Unselected Journals of Emma A. Lion v.5* by Beth Brower: Delightful! Hilarious on so many levels and just enjoyable.

A reader from Lowell read *The unselected journals of Emma M Lion #5* by Beth Brower: Covers November- December. Lots of talk about Christmas presents and snow. Any one else think that Emma is a MPDG?

A reader from Belmont read *The Vanderbeekers of 141st Street* by Karina Yan Glaser: Completely charming. I'm not usually drawn to middle-grade, but I wanted to try this after hearing it recommended on What Should I Read Next. I loved the richness of the neighborhood, and the many subplots. Excellent! And takes place in winter.

A reader from Boston read *The Very Secret Society of Irregular Witches* by Sangu Mandanna: *The Very Secret Society of Witches* is a cozy story about what it means to be different and still find community anyways. Our main character, Mika Moon, has had a lonely childhood while balancing the Rules (the status quo meant to be witches safe and isolated from the rest of the world) and her own desires of belonging. One day, her witchy "cosplay" social media accounts lead her to the Nowhere House as a magic tutor, home to three young witches, their many caretakers, and more than a few secrets. As the story progresses, we get to see if Mika can overcome her solitary upbringing and find a home at Nowhere House, all while attempting to teach the young witches how to keep their unpredictable powers in check by Christmas and the Winter Solstice. A wonderful read with many heartwarming and funny moments!

A reader from Newton read *The Way of the Househusband, Vol. 8* by Kousuke Oono: An ex-yakuza becomes an unlikely househusband. Each chapter deals with very minor domestic incidents in wildly overdramatic style; in one chapter, the main character deals with winter-proofing his house and shoveling the sidewalk.

A reader from New Bedford read *The Weight* by Melissa Mendes: Western Mass author and cartoonist Melissa Mendes released this 500-page graphic novel late last year. Powerful, early 20th century story of rural life in Pennsylvania. Wintry scenes are depicted throughout. Inspired by her grandfather's journals.

A reader from Blackstone read *The White Christmas Inn* by Colleen Wright: Great book to read on a cold, winter day. Great characters and sweet story line.

A reader from Northfield read *The White Darkness* by David Grann: Beautiful photos and inspiring story.

A reader from Natick read *The Winners* by Fredrik Backman: Incredible.

A reader from Abington read *The Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: One of my all time favorites. The storytelling is fabulous and it was the right time to revisit an old friend to see if I read it in a different way.

A reader from Salisbury read *The Winter Girl* by Matt Marinovich: The story takes place way out in the Hamptons away from the big city. An area of abandoned or closed up summer vacation homes. A married professional couple goes out to assist the wife's dying father. The couple's marriage is struggling and the husband soon finds that there are secrets layered on top of secrets in his wife's relationship with her father. As the secrets unfold the young husband becomes sordidly involved with dealing with his wife's secrets.

A reader from Beverlyl read *THE Winter Guest* by Pam Jenoff: This book was enjoyable with a few twists. Historical fiction.

A reader from Malden read *The Winter Knight* by Jes Battis: An interesting working of Arthurian tales into a queer, modern story.

A reader from Somerville read *The Winter Knight* by Jes Battis: The back cover description of this one intrigued me, but I ended up being disappointed. I didn't feel like the world was very fleshed out, and some of the humor and references really dated the novel. The beginning sets up a mystery, but the clues don't really progress throughout the book until the very end. I ended up barely even caring about who the murderer was. Only positive thing I'll say about this book is that the main characters had non traditional "hero" backstories, I appreciated the representation of older and neurodivergent heros.

A reader from Quincy read *The Winter of Our Discontent* by John Steinbeck: Although this book was not set in the winter, it did have symbolic connections to winter in the sense of a waning decay in the morality of the main character, who succumbs to pressure he is feeling to raise his family's lost status in the town where they have resided for many years.

A reader from Edgartown read *The Winter of the Dollhouse* by Laura Amy Schlitz: This book was pure delight. It was one of the most enjoyable books I have read in years. When I was little I used to believe that toys were secretly alive and this is exactly what goes on in this story. Feeling nostalgic? Dive in! You'll love it.

A reader from Fall River read *The Winter People* by Jennifer McMahon: I'd describe this as a horror/mystery novel. The story takes place in a remote town during the cold winters of Vermont. The mystery starts with the brutal murder of Sara Shea in 1908 amid rumors of ghosts and "sleepers" who return from the dead. The drama continues to the present day as others vanish from this small town. I found the book to be entertaining, but I was a bit disappointed with the ending. Overall it was a cozy winter read!

A reader from Methuen read *The Winter People* by Jennifer McMahon: The book explored grief and the inability to move on, which reflects a harsh and uncertain season of an individual's life. These themes, as well as the setting, really captured the essence of winter. I loved the plot and gruesome details of the story, but it had multiple timelines that did not

mesh well. I would recommend this to someone who loves horror and exploring deeper themes within a book :)

A reader from East Bridgewater read *The Winter People* by Jennifer McMahon: The story line pulled me in. I love a great mystery. The story kept my attention, till the very last page. Haunting & sad @ the same time...

A reader from Whitman read *The Winter People* by Jennifer McMahon: An interesting horror thriller that had me hooked. Perfectly creepy and cold for January.

A reader from Middleton read *The Winter People* by Jennifer McMahon: This one was outside my normal genre, but I really enjoyed it!

A reader from Malden read *The Winter People* by Jennifer McMahon: This is a story about grief and the things it can drive us to do. As well as a reflection that there are things in this world worse than death. This is a dual narrative story that follows two timelines and multiple characters through their journeys. It is suspenseful, mysterious, reflective, dark, and eerie. It was also the perfect book to be finishing as the snowstorm rolled in this weekend in MA, it felt like you could look outside and see the characters within the snow drifts. I adored this book!

A reader from Springfield read *The Winter People* by Jennifer McMahon: it was very well written, but I did not like the ending or the magical Native American trope it leaned heavily into. There was 1 Native American character, she had actual evil magic, and she never gets a real name. Which was pretty uncomfortable to read.

A reader from Vineyard Haven read *The Winter People* by Jennifer McMahon: Chose this in an attempt to read something off our bookshelf. Much more of a fantasy/magic angle than I'd ever normally read. Pretty solid!

A reader from Sharon read *The Winter Soldier* by Daniel Mason: Takes place mostly in winter on the Eastern front of WWI. Lots of cool medical stuff.

A reader from Wilmington read *The Winter Soldier* by Daniel Mason: Moving story of horrors of war, in this case WWI. Also a bit of a love story, but not too heavy on the romance, which is good, because I'm not a romance novel fan.

A reader from Boston read *The Winter Soldier* by Daniel Mason: An atmospheric journey set in WWI, depicting the brutal realities of war in a remote medical outpost. The novel features harrowing descriptions of winter, including severe food shortages and frostbite.

A reader from Methuen read *The Winter Soldier* by Daniel Mason: I love the medical lingo and the love story that emerges from the depths of war. I felt the story had a great beginning and middle but the end fell short of expectations.

A reader from Attleboro read *The Winter Soldier* by Daniel Mason: This book was an interesting story from World War I. It centered around a medical student who became a doctor by enlisting in the army, very much before he was ready to practice medicine - especially the procedures and extreme cases he would see in the war field. The story was also about the "nurse" who was the de-facto doctor before the replacement doctor came along. This nun carried out all the doctor duties, and trained the new doctor, then they fell in love. The story was not a fairy-tale, it was realistic for war time. An interesting, well-researched, and accurate story worth the read.

A reader from Danvers read *The Winter Soldier* by Daniel Mason: An interesting story set during World War I that follows a young doctor trying to escape his aristocratic family lineage. He ends up assigned to an isolated hospital outpost in the Carpathian Mountains where he is tested physically, emotionally and spiritually. Overall, the story and the writing are compelling--especially its description of the brutal winters and, with medical supplies and personnel low, the primitive medicine that must be rendered. The "winter soldier" is actually a patient at the hospital who the doctor feels he has betrayed despite his well-intended care. The book explores the doctor's guilt as a result of this, and also the love he feels for the secretive nurse (the only other medical professional at the hospital). After the war, he hopes to resolve these issues by searching to reconnect with both. As the book flap indicates, this book is part historical war story, part romance and part coming-of-age. Although the ending was a bit contrived, I overall enjoyed this read.

A reader from Gloucester read *The Winter Soldier* by Daniel Mason: This World War I story was a good blend of war story, medical knowledge of the time, romance, and mystery. Hard for me to put down when I should have been working.

A reader from Hinsdale read *The Wisdom of Winter* by Annie Seyler: This was a fantastic book! Being from out west and settled in the east, I loved that the book took place in both places. The complicated character was intriguing and the way that the book skipped sections, made the book exciting.

A reader from Vineyard Haven read *The Wish* by Nicholas Sparks: Classic Sparks - heart tugging.

A reader from Dracut read *The Wolf King* by Lauren Palphreyman: This book is exactly what I was looking for to get me in the winter mood! acotar meets outlander meets game of thrones, a princess finding her power, a clan of Scottish werewolves, what's not to love?

A reader from Somerville read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: Unexpectedly short, but beautiful illustrations and writing in the style of a fairy tale.

A reader from Andover read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: What a delightful little morsel! I had not realized Susanna Clarke had a newer book out after Piranesi and was so excited to find it in the suggested books list. It's mystical and ethereal but some parts of it feel very real; a perfect fairy tale to read when it's cold outside and one is cozy inside!

A reader from New Bedford read *The Wood At Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: Winter's unworldly magic. Nature's sentient beings, wonderful animals and a young woman's passion are woven together in a short tale of fantasy.

A reader from Berkley read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: This was a nice book that transported me to a beautiful wintery woods. This is the second book I've read by the author and she has such a way of transporting the reader into the setting. Particularly in this book, the illustrations helped further transport me into the wintery woods scene.

A reader from Rockland read *The Wood at Midwinter* by susanna clarke: This was just weird for me. Perhaps I needed to have read a book of hers before going into this super short one.

A reader from Belchertown read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: The aesthetic of this book is lovely, but I wonder if I should have read Clarke's other work in order to understand and enjoy this story. It didn't land for me.

A reader from Mansfield read *The wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: This small book is simply charming. The bright purple-blue cover opens to simple text with black and white illustrations on each page. It felt like a child reading a fairy tale. It was relaxing, mysterious and fun. I loved it!

A reader from barre read *The wood at midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: This was a short read, with a magical message. It wasn't really anything like I expected it was going to be. I really enjoyed it though.

A reader from SCITUATE read *The Wood At Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: Very attractive little book with fascinating illustrations. This work brings together the worlds of humans and animals and is rather mystical.

A reader from Mansfield read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: A spellbinding, beautiful book with thoughtful illustrations that might help you appreciate winter and the animal world.

A reader from Milford read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: Such magical descriptions of the woods and life within it, but at only 50 pages, I wanted more.

A reader from Quincy read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarkr: I wish it were longer! But the illustrations were cute, and i want to read Piranesi even more now.

A reader from Wellesley read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: *The Wood at Midwinter* is a sketch more than a fable. The story conveys the outlines of what happens to a young woman, Merodwis, who can communicate with living things. Merodwis makes a secret stop in the forest where she makes a pledge with a vision of her future self with a child that will eventually lead her to abandon her life among people and return to the woods. This brief story is best at creating atmosphere. The woods, the animals, and the snow are captured in lyrical descriptions along with beautiful illustrations. Snow in this story conveys a magical silence, a harkening back to other fables and tales. As Clarke mentions in the epilogue, the woods are also a character. The trees speak to Merodwis and the reader imagines what they say. The invisible - and sometimes inaudible - connection between nature and humans can be heard in *The Wood at MidWinter*. One could quibble that this story should have more to say, but the reminder that comes mystical connection between the woman and the woods is enough.

A reader from Halifax read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: Short read, but led me down a rabbit trail exploring the time period.

A reader from ONSET read *The wood at midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: Beautiful illustration.

A reader from Milton read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: A very sweet and quick read. I wholeheartedly agree with the author...there ought to be more pigs in books!

A reader from Stoneham read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: loved the whimsy of it all! I do wish there was a little more - ended in a little bit of a mystery.

A reader from Reading read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: Lots of fun pictures!

A reader from Medford read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Clarke: This interesting short story felt like a fable or almost a fairy tale. There's an interesting Afterword in which Clarke describes how she came to write the story. The world she creates is apparently the world of Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell which makes me curious about that book.

A reader from Lakeville read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke, Victoria Sawdon: A fictitious short story with beautiful black watercolored illustrations from Victoria Sawdon as Clarke describes a new character and story set within her fantasy world. Merowdis has special powers to be able to communicate with animals and trees and is led into the woods where her desires and her emotions perhaps get the better of her as she moves away from

what tethers her to this world into another one altogether. In equal parts tragic as it is beautiful, with the author's note at the end summarizing and explaining Clarke's intentions and inspirations, this book will provide you with an element of surprise, wonder, and eventual conclusion to that which makes us human and others saintly, and how we can learn to appreciate nature and fictional characters transpiring the worlds around them, and what that means about ourselves in our own worlds, too.

A reader from New Bedford read *The Wood At Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: A lovely and enchanting short story/fairytale about a strange girl with a deep love for the woods and its inhabitants.

A reader from Boston read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: After two failed attempts at reading books I thought would take place in winter ("The Winter Queen" by Boris Akunin and "January" by Sara Gallardo - both amazing books) I found Clarke's book on display at the BPL in the North End. It was the perfect book to read during the snow storm! I would not have picked it up (or the other books) without this challenge!

A reader from Haverhill read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: The illustrations are beautiful. The story is magical! I wish it was longer.

A reader from Reading read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: It's an excellent and thought-provoking short story, there is a lot that is left unexplained that is fun to explore. Some parts of it reminds me of a project I wrote and illustrated for my college literature class, where we could make a short story accompanied by photos. I found the characterization and humanization of the woods to be very interesting. Something I also really enjoyed was reading Susanna Clarke's afterword. While a lot of it was very interesting to me, one of the things that resonated with me the most was how she talked about making the setting into its own character (the trees) and how much the aspect of it being winter added to the story (Which if I have read correctly it a huge part of the reason it was set in winter was so it could be a christmas story?). She talks about how the snow adds a "quieting of the spirit" and as someone who hikes all seasons including winter, I have to agree. I feel like she captured some of the essence of the woods encompassed in snow during the winter time. From personal experience, the woods gets so quite that you can clearly hear the occasional rustle from a woodland creature and the creaking of the trees, as if they are speaking their own language. This is a sentiment that I thought got across very well in the story. I think reading this story during the winter in the aftermath of a snow storm adds a lot to it.

A reader from Somerville read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: Unfortunately this was not my favorite read. I think the illustrations did most of the heavy lifting but I didn't

feel I found much within the story itself, let alone the fact that I was set during the winter. It was only in reading the afterward that the concept really came to life for me. It felt beautiful but not a particularly enchanting narrative. For a short story, it didn't pack the punch I was hoping for.

A reader from Harwich read *The Wood At Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: I can't quite remember any time I chose to read a fantasy writing; this short story has made me inquisitive to explore future fantasy novels. The black and white illustrations were "unusual" to me (in a good way!) as an adult reader. And, I thoroughly enjoyed her Afterword, which made reference to the influence that some of the songs of Kate Bush had on her writing this beauty of my pick for the January Reading Challenge!

A reader from Heath read *The Wood at Midwinter* by Susanna Clarke: The adage, "Don't judge a book by its cover," does not apply to this fantasy tale of a young woman who befriends animals. The cover is a deep blue background covered with gold and white etchings. She is most at home in the wood at winter. Despite cautionary words from a fox, she wishes for a child to be born to her in midwinter.

A reader from Boston read *The Writing Retreat* by Julia Bartz: This was a great thriller that had me hooked the whole time. I really liked that the primary relationship explored in the story was a female friendship. There was a great balance between describing the complexity of Alex and Wren's friendship and the mystery plot. Alex, Wren, and Roza felt like fully fleshed-out characters with believable motivations and conflicts. Although the twist was a predictable, I liked where the story went at the end.

A reader from Berkley read *The Writing Retreat* by Julia Bartz: Aspiring authors on a writing retreat put on by their hero at her old, creepy, and possibly haunted mansion turns unexpected when one of the women goes missing during a snow storm. Things really pick up after that point with some unexpected twists and turns turns.

A reader from Boston read *The Writing Retreat* by Bartz, Julia: A fun thriller with a pleasantly disturbed protagonist. There were some details and bits of dialogue that I didn't find believable, but once the story heightened into a more extreme, gothic mode, it stopped bothering me.

A reader from Weymouth read *The Wyoming Blizzard of 1949* by James Fuller: This book was a great reminder about the importance of being prepared, respecting the power of a blizzard, and of being neighborly.

A reader from Peabody read *These Silent Woods* by Kimi Cunningham Grant: Cooper and Finch have been in hiding and living in the woods for eight years. The only life Finch has ever

known. Once their connection to the outside world is compromised, their lives begin to change quickly. A story of survival, sacrifice and human connection.

A reader from Wakefield read *This is Not a Holiday Romance* by Camilla Isley: Didn't love this. The two main characters' behavior was so annoying. The way they talk and behave would've been fine if they were teenagers or even in college but not 28 and 33 year olds.

A reader from Wellfleet read *This Land of Snow* by Anders Morley: A journey across Canada, in the winter, on skis! While I enjoyed this book, it is dry reading. I was hoping for more show and less tell. However, that being said, I did really enjoy reading about the people encountered on this amazing journey. What annoyed me was the mid-life crisis rambles.

A reader from West Yarmouth read *This Winter* by Alice Oseman: As a fan of the Heartstopper series, I was really excited to spend more time with the characters I love! It was also great to see how recovery can affect everyone in the family, while still being a Christmas story.

A reader from Tewksbury read *Ths Snowstorm* by Triona Walsh: I enjoyed this book. There were a lot of twists and turns in the plot (and I didn't guess the ending as I often do). The author had many subplots going on at the same time and it kept my interest. It is about a group of friends meeting up on an island, off of Ireland, after a 10 year gap. A snowstorm traps them on the island for more than 3 days. Deaths occur and everybody is a suspect and nobody knows who to trust. Fast-paced book.

A reader from South Hamilton read *Time of the Child* by Niall Williams: Unfortunately, I did not enjoy this as much as I had hoped. I think I found it depressing to read a book set during the Christmas season in January. Overall this was a bit too literary for my tastes.

A reader from Boston read *Tinkers* by Paul Harding: Cover shows a winter scene and I read it focused on winter, but now having read it, I'm not sure. Still, a lovely, impressionistic short novel with some nice philosophical passages and a fun fake clock manual.

A reader from East Sandwich read *Tisha* by Robert Specht and Ann Hobbs Purdy: A good read about teaching in rural Alaska in mid 20th century.

A reader from Danvers read *To Build a Fire* by Jack London: So descriptive felt like I was freezing in the Tundra myself.

A reader from Wakefield read *To The Bright Edge of the World* by Eowyn Ivey: I went to my local library looking for Ivey's "The Snow Child" and ended up with this instead. Historical fiction can be hit or miss for me, but this covered the January challenge (what's more wintry than Alaska?) so I begrudgingly began to read it. I couldn't put it down. Ivey braids a tale of love and adventure, with an otherworldly element threaded in. I often found myself

rereading passages, simply in awe of the prose. At times the plot was slow, but I was so invested in the characters it was worth it. Definitely recommend.

A reader from Somerville read *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* by Gabrielle Zevin: Fantastic book whose Cambridge-based setting in the winter (for part of the book, at least) rang true to me. Emotional. It's one of the best books I've read as an adult. The video game references made me smile because they were all from an era of gaming with which I am deeply familiar. We all contain multitudes, and this book helps us to see the humanity and the love that can be beyond mere romance.

A reader from Hampden read *Tourist Season* by Carl Hiaasen: *Tourist Season* is a mystery-satire-caper novel which takes place in the winter in Miami-Dade County, Florida. Yes, Florida has a winter. The locals call it "The Season." Los Noches di Diciembre is a small, violent gang led by disillusioned Miami Sun columnist, Skip Wiley. Wiley is determined to return Florida to its former pristine state by physically eliminating all those responsible for the desecration of Florida's beauty. Tourists, "snow-birds", developers, Chamber of Commerce members, retirees and all other invasive types have become targets for Los Noches' revenge. FormerSun reporter/ colleague of Skp Wiley, Brian Keys is a private investigator, Brain Keyes, has been called to find ways to end the violence. He also sees the case has a way to restore balance to a life that has gone somewhat off the rails. Carl Hiassen has been a columnist for the Miami Herald for several decades. He probably is more familiar with "Florida Man" than anyone else in America. Some of the Florida "Men" are part of Los Noches di Diciembre and could be taken from real life individuals who could only be found in Florida.

A reader from Northbrough read *Treasures of the Snow* by Patricia St John: Annette is intent on revenge and does all she can to make life a misery for Lucien after he accidentally hurts her sister. His only friend is the old man up the mountain who recognises his skill in carving wood and gives him new hope. It is set in Switzerland and has themes of forgiveness and repentance.

A reader from Hanover read *Twelve Slays of Christmas* by Jacqueline Frost: Fun cozy mystery with a tree farm location in Maine.

A reader from Melrose read *Una semana en la nieve/Class Trip* by Emmanuel Carrère: This is one I wouldn't have finished if not for the challenge. It was well written, but not my kind of book.

A reader from Bellingham read *Under the Same Stars* by Libba Bray: This is a historical mystery that takes place over three periods in time, but the main mystery was a missing person's case on the Winter Solstice in Germany, 1941. The events in Germany, summer of

1980 and New York City, spring of 2020 connect back to the missing teens from World War II, and they are all blended together beautifully.

A reader from Newton read *Us Against You* by Fredrik Backman: This is the sequel to *Beartown*, which I loved. This one was just as good. A really heart wrenching story about a snowy town in Sweden that revolves around their hockey team.

A reader from Franklin read *Us Against You* by Fredrick Bachman: This book focused on another heavy topic placed in the same town, *Beartown*, as the previous book. The story continued and we learned more about the main characters and got to see them grow and continue to learn from their experiences.

A reader from Spencer read *Valley Forge* by Bob Drury & Tom Clavin: "The incredible true story of the crucible endured by the Continental Army during the winter of 1777-1778. Starvation, exposure, disease, and desertion were overwhelming at the winter encampment of Valley Forge. Despite those terrible hardships, General Washington improbably managed to turn his raggedy citizen-soldiers into a professional fighting force."

A reader from Cambridge read *Victorian Psycho* by Virginia Feito: Set over the course of one Christmas, *Victorian Psycho* is a gothic black comedy about a psychopathic governess on a bloodthirsty revenge spree.

A reader from Amherst read *Wake Up Nat & Darcy* by Kate Cochrane: A very enjoyable sapphic hockey romance, taking place during the winter olympics. If this were real I'd absolutely have been one of the #puckinghotties followers :D

A reader from Amherst read *Wake Up Nat & Darcy* by Kate Cochrane: Rival women's hockey icons team up to commentate at the Winter Olympics. I enjoyed it and would recommend.

A reader from South Hadley read *Ways to Hide in Winter* by Sarah St. Vincent: This suspense novel takes place in rural Pennsylvania where a 'stranger' (aka 'not American') has taken refuge in the hostel of a state park along the Appalachian Trail. We know his first name but he is nearly always referred to as 'the stranger.' He befriends the park's two winter employees who in their own ways are also hiding from the pain in their past. The story alternates between winter scenes in the park and memories of domestic abuse in the past. The author grew up in rural Pennsylvania and is a human rights attorney who has worked with survivors of domestic violence and with Human Rights Watch. This is a disturbing book challenging the reader to question- who can be trusted, what is kindness, what is betrayal, can a person be capable of both? I enjoy reading books set in my home state of Pennsylvania, but this book is certainly not for everyone. Suspenseful ? Yes. Disturbing? Yes. Enjoyable ? Not sure.

A reader from Charlton read *We Do Not Part* by Han Kang: This one definitely evoked the feeling of winter! It was a bit outside what I normally read, and it took me a bit of effort to work through it. But, it was beautifully written and an interesting read to reflect on.

A reader from Pensacola read *We Do Not Part* by Han Kang: This book also served as part of another reading challenge I'm doing for the year, where I read 12 books from international authors. I didn't know anything about the Korean war or the politics discussed in this book, so it was interesting to also learn some of that history. Despite being confused in some places, due to the politics I didn't quite follow, the writing was beautiful and touching.

A reader from Essex read *We Do Not Part* by Han Kang: Well written with some beautiful imagery, but addresses a tragic topic. A little hard to follow sometimes due to its almost dreamlike and non-linear structure.

A reader from Beverly read *We Do Not Part* by Han Kang: Beautiful and haunting. Definitely gives winter vibes. Part of history I knew nothing about. Was great to read something where you only hear directly from women characters.

A reader from Eastham read *We Do Not Part* by Han Kang: Emotional and thought provoking read. The book draws you into the setting, allowing you to feel the cold and snow around the character, while questioning what is real and what is imagined. My interest in the background history was also piqued through the imagery and description of the feelings evoked in the character.

A reader from Foxborough read *We Do Not Part* by Han Kang: "In the sudden lull, I feel as if I've opened the door to a dream within a dream and stepped inside." This line from *We Do Not Part* encapsulates the eerie sense of the walls between dream worlds and the 'real world' as they dissolve. Who are the ghosts? What is real in this atmospheric, wintry tale?

A reader from Melrose read *We Do Not Part* by Han Kang: Ethereal and beautiful in spite of the difficult subject. I didn't know anything about the history going in and it's devastating. Easy 5/5.

A reader from Spencer read *We Do Not Part* by Han Kang: I found *We Do Not Part* to be well written but not particularly engaging, though I suspect this is because I lack certain cultural contexts and histories associated with South Korea. After reflecting on the text, however, I've come to interpret the book as a reflection on what we, the living, owe each other and the past. A theme I find worthwhile to consider.

A reader from Gardner read *We Love You, Bunny* by Mona Awad: Starts in Fall continues into a very eventful Winter leading to an interesting Spring. A fun, curious, horrifying world to get lost in.

A reader from New Bedford read *We Used To Live Here* by Marcus Kliewer: One of the best psychological horror novels I've read. Never before have I jumped while reading.

A reader from Revere read *We Used to Live Here* by Marcus Kliewer: excellent haunted house/ghost story. Reality bending, truly bone chilling.

A reader from Tewksbury read *We Used to Live Here* by Marcus Kliewer: I loved this book! It entertained me the whole way through and the ending was great. I loved that the ending was left to interpretation while also being final and solved.

A reader from Vineyard Haven read *We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart: My niece wanted to read this together. She loved it. I was less of a fan.

A reader from Tewksbury read *Wed to the Troll King* by Lidiya Foxglove: A spicy retelling of a lesser known fairy tale, "East of the Sun, West of the Moon."

A reader from Springfield read *Week in winter* by Maeve Binchy: Binchy's books are so gentle as the plots unfold. This one is the same. The plot is secondary to the character introductions but they come together gracefully.

A reader from Attleboro read *Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy: This was a comforting cozy read for January. I loved all of the different characters who visited Stone House. I would love to vacation there!

A reader from MELROSE read *What the Dead Leave Behind* by Rosemary Simpson: Begins during the Great Blizzard of 1888 in New York City.

A reader from Weymouth read *What the River Knows (Secrets of the Nile)* by Isabel Ibanez: Atmospheric book set in the 1840's in Egypt, in which a single woman looks for her disappeared parents while exploring Egyptian tombs. Some magical realism as well, which I usually like, but this book was paced a bit too slowly for me. Also, this is Book 1 of a duology. Not sure I'll read the second.

A reader from Westminster read *When the Ice is Gone* by Paul Bierman: A book written by a glaciologist that offers a chance for non-technical people to understand the secrets that ice cores can tell us about past climates, what is at risk if we don't address climate change, and what knowledge we will lose as the ice sheet melts.

A reader from Norton read *Where Coyotes Howl* by Sandra Dallas: While this book covers a variety of seasons there is significant portions that focus on the harsh winters on the Wyoming Prairie. Women had it hardest while navigating the life of homesteading on the frontier. The main character Ellen Webster is new to the prairie and faces some of the most catastrophic events during the brutal winters.

A reader from Westford read *While it was Snowing* by Julia London: Cute rom com book about families and Christmas.

A reader from Easthampton read *White Doe* by Maria Williams: A slim book of dream-like lyric poetry exploring the all-too-real experience of gradually losing a beloved parent to dementia, set against a cold backdrop of snow and the creatures that can survive in it.

A reader from Whitman read *White Fang* by Jack London: I loved the writing style of the book! It was such a perfect read for the recent snowy days we have had. I would rate this a 9/10.

A reader from Cambridge read *White Nights* by Fyodor Dostoevsky: I really disliked this book but I'm happy to have made the decision to read it regardless. I've only read "The Brother's Karamazov" by Dostoevsky previously so it's been nice to broaden my understanding of his writing through "White Nights." I found the book too abstract and dialogue-based for my preferences, although the decision to use the pathetic fallacy of snow to heighten the solitude of the main characters was certainly effective.

A reader from Haverhill read *White Out* by DHONIELLE CLAYTON, TIFFANY D. JACKSON, NIC STONE: A cute teen book about friends coming together to help during a rare winter storm set in Atlanta, Georgia! Each character's POV was written by a different author! This book was recommended to me by a local bookstore All She Wrote in Somerville!

A reader from Danvers read *Whiter Than Snow* by andra Dallas: This book was put into the winter themed display by my local library. It was talking about the setting in winter and while the book is in the mountains and the avalanche is a part of the book, the majority is just talking about the background of the characters. It is more focused on the people and mistakes they made in the past that led them to this location for almost 2/3 of the book. The final 1/3 is about the avalanche and the aftermath and so I would not have considered this a "winter themed book". It might be some people's preferred style, but it was not what I was looking for for a winter themed book.

A reader from Shutesbury read *Wild Dark Shore* by Charlotte McConaghy: Set in Antarctica, a woman is stranded on a remote island after a terrible storm. The island is inhabited only by 3 children and their father. The island had been inhabited also by researchers but they mysteriously left the island suddenly. With the backdrop of a cold and forbidding winter and rising treacherous sea, the book has twists and turns aplenty. Highly recommend.

A reader from Amherst read *Wild Dark Shore* by Charlotte McConaghy: Gorgeous thriller set in an island close to Antarctica.

A reader from Wakefield read *Wildness Before Something Sublime* by Leila Chatti: I liked this book of poems. There is much pain, emptiness, and darkness, but there is also beauty. And I appreciated the section at the end about how the author wrote these poems.

A reader from Dracut read *Wings of Starlight* by Allison Saft: This book follows the queen-in-training of Pixie Hollow, Clarion, as she partners with the Warden of the Winter Woods in order to stop monsters that are destroying her kingdom. The author uses incredible descriptions of nature to set the scenes as Pixie Hollow is divided into four main territories—Winter, Spring, Summer, & Autumn. As Clarion (a summer fairy) spends more time in Winter, she begins to fall in love with its quiet beauty as she also falls in love with the Warden, Milori. Their romance is sweet while it lasts but it is a doomed love story because how can a summer & winter fairy ever be together? Overall, I thought this novel was cozy & lush with description. A perfect cozy romance & adventure story for the snow storm.

A reader from Cambridge read *Winter* by Val McDermid: Very nice audio! It's a nice, cozy, short meditation on the dark months; perfect for early January.

A reader from Hudson read *Winter* by Val McDermid: Part memoir, part love letters to Winter and all the beauty it brings, this is a comforting read that reminds us of the fact that Winter is a time for turning to the simple pleasures in life.

A reader from Stoneham read *Winter* by Ali Smith: Interesting snapshot into four lives of people brought together during the Christmas holiday. Themes of family, politics, nature and art. I liked the perspectives presented.

A reader from Attleboro read *winter* by ali smith: I felt like this book was slow. But I did like the reference to different songs.

A reader from Burlington read *Winter* by Christopher Nicholason: This is a story of growing old and interconnected lives.

A reader from Melrose read *Winter* by Ali Smith: Not quite sure how to describe this book, I really like Ali Smith's writing, interesting, whimsical, political, thoughtful. Plot? Sort of, but it's more about the journey. I think!

A reader from Jacksonville read *Winter* by Ali Smith: A hard book to get into but once you do the book is very enjoyable. The book is mainly the life and relationships of the characters.

A reader from Charlton read *Winter at the Door* by Sarah Graves: Quick, light read, fairly engaging.

A reader from Bellingham read *Winter Storms* by Elin Hilderbrand: Elin Hilderbrand writes book about Nantucket.

A reader from Spencer read *Winter Bloom* by Tara Heavey: This one has been in my to read pile for some time. I enjoyed the characters and the development of the garden throughout the story.

A reader from Spencer read *Winter Bloom* by Tara Heavey: This book was about all of the seasons of a garden told through the lives of the people who came together to rescue an abandoned garden. Each of their stories were woven together seamlessly to tell the story. A really good book.

A reader from North Attleboro read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: Alternates between past and present time with a family secret. Very good read.

A reader from Eastham read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: Another deep dive into the relationships of mothers and daughters with some unexpected twists and turns. The father holds the family together but when he is sick the mother and daughters need to find peace with each other. The journey is hard but uplifting. I would recommend reading.

A reader from Yarmouth Port read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: An entertaining novel that centers on strained family relationships among two sisters and their mother and a hidden family secret that prevents them from truly knowing each other. The death of the father facilitates the uncovering of the truth and growth among the characters. The book is well written and has an element of historical fiction to it.

A reader from Peabody read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: Kristin Hannah is one of my top 3 favorite authors, and yet I have procrastinated picking this one up because I wasn't sure I would like it as much as some of her others. Even though it wasn't my favorite read, it was still a 4.75 star read for me, which shows how much I love her other novels! She is just the queen of historical fiction and I love how this one was presented as a story within a story, making it so much more real.

A reader from Salisbury read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: Kristin Hannah's novels are consistently impactful, and *Winter Garden* is no exception. It tells the story of a fractured family pushed even further apart by loss and grief. It then travels a path to slowly draw them back together through a childhood fairytale. As each character uncovers truths about themselves and each other, the book unfolds with strong emotions, tears, heartbreak, joy and finally understanding. The results are a hard earned sense of connection and a new bond that lingers long after the final page.

A reader from Whitinsville read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: As always, Kristin Hannah writes stories so well. A beautiful story about how powerful women really are and how deeply they love.

A reader from Wrentham read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: I have read a few Kristin Hannah books and it has really opened my world of love for historical fictions. This was another amazing story full of emotion, grief, family, and origin. Easy 5 stars!

A reader from Chicopee read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: A beautiful, and sad, story about mother-daughter relationships, loss, and love.

A reader from Hopkinton read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: Breathtaking book with details and vivid story telling. It pulls you in and you want to know what happens next. A story of sisters, mothers and the complexities of family.

A reader from Gardner read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: Story about mother daughter relationships. How we don't know about our mother's past and how it affects us both.

A reader from Ipswich read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: This will stick with me for a long time!

A reader from Salisbury read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: *Winter Garden* is as heartbreaking as it is beautifully written. Kristin Hannah always has a way of capturing a moment in history and expanding it into a gut-wrenching POV that makes us feel their pain all these years later. The way trauma is passed down from mother to child without knowing was portrayed in such an authentic, natural way.

A reader from Medford read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: I know very little about the history of Leningard during the WWII, and upon reading the book, I got down the rabbit hole to learn more about the history. It's a beautifully written story, a story within a story, very unique!

A reader from Framingham read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: Another great book by Kristin Hannah. The cold and snow outside made me feel like I was sitting in the Winter Garden with Anya. I love the way Hannah writes about complex family relationships.

A reader from Brookfield read *Winter Garden* by Kristin Hannah: I enjoyed this book a lot. I have read other Kristin Hannah, and this one did not disappoint. I'm looking forward to February.

A reader from East Longmeadow read *Winter Grave* by Helen Tursten: This is a thrilling mystery that is set in Sweden. The book was captivating.

A reader from North Weymouth read *Winter Grave* by Helene Tursten: A book described as "art of the popular Scandinavian noir genre." I thought I'd give a try, but I did not enjoy it at all. It didn't help that it was the second book in a series of three.

A reader from Melrose read *winter hours: prose, prose poems, and poems* by mary oliver: I love Mary Oliver! Was so happy that I "had" to read this one. Again, not entirely and explicitly about winter, except for the last section of poems, but it did have a lot to say about the "winter" of life and reflection on her own life and process for writing. Fascinating exploration of her own work, hints of biography, (not much,) and her thoughts on other poets.. she was a very private person, and I took from her exploration of other writers the importance of the work foremost (versus searching into biography for meaning) my favorite phrase, from early in the book: "all narrative is metaphor." This challenge would have been easier for me if I had not just read Katherine May's *Wintering* last month. Can't get more winter than that, and I enjoyed it tremendously, but I want to stick with the program here, at least in spirit.

A reader from Boston read *Winter in Paradise* by Elin Hilderbrand: Picked up the right book (a novel whose beach read quickness was combined with just the right amount of betrayal-and mystery-packed family drama) at the right time (that post-holiday, sit-on-the-couch-and-read-all-day haze).

A reader from Greenfield read *Winter in Paradise* by Elin Hilderbrand: Most of this story takes place on the island of St. John. I had visited this beautiful island briefly as a shore excursion during a Caribbean cruise so was intrigued. The only part to do with winter is in the start of the book & new year holiday when the cheating husband leading a secret life is killed in a helicopter crash. His family discovers he has been leading a double life which brings them to St. John. What i enjoyed most about this book was the location. The story otherwise seemed familiar yet kept my interest, unlike 2 other books i had started for this month's selection and didn't get 1/2 way through either of them. It was also nice dreaming of Caribbean beaches in January. I have met Elin on Nantucket at a book signing and read some of her previous novels. If you are an Elin fan you will most likely enjoy this novel.

A reader from Beverly read *Winter in Paradise* by Elin Hilderbrand: My first Elin Hilderbrand book! I can't wait to read the rest of the series.

A reader from Franklin read *Winter in Sokcho* by Elisa Shua Dusapon: I really enjoyed the setting of the book, a Korean beach town in the winter. In the summer, the town is filled with tourists but the winter is cold, quiet and isolated. The dullness of the winter is broken for the young women working at the guesthouse when a mysterious French artist arrives. This novella is a page turning quick read.

A reader from Newton read *Winter Loon* by Susan Bernhard: This book was a coming of age story about a teenage boy who tragically loses his mother - he is with her at the moment of her death, and must grapple with this, his remaining (troubled) family and what it means for him to go on. It is a slow but moving account of one boy's growth into adulthood.

A reader from West Brookfield read *Winter Pasture* by Li Juan: This work of narrative non-fiction is the account of one woman's winter spent with Kazakh herders in Northwestern China. The descriptions of the harshness of the winter cold, hard labor presented a very different way of life and experiencing winter than my own!

A reader from Beverly read *Winter People* by Jennifer McMahon: It was ok.

A reader from Beverly read *Winter Rose* by Patricia McKillip: Folk tale retelling with beautiful imagery.

A reader from Melrose read *Winter Run* by Robert Ashcom: This was a meditation on country boyhood in the mid-20th century. It was different than my typical reading but was lyrical and interesting.

A reader from Nashua read *Winter Sisters* by Robin Oliveira: This was an excellent read, but it really pulled at the heart. Although there was a main theme of the story, the author did a great job of pulling in the other characters' stories in a meaningful way.

A reader from North Andover read *Winter Sisters* by Robin Oliveira: a riveting story of a sister's bond. A page turner about child rape that keeps one guessing. My first time reading this talented author.

A reader from Lawrence read *Winter Solstice* by Nina MacLaughlin: I wasn't sure what to expect but the stories made me think of my childhood during the winter. Good memories.

A reader from Attleboro read *Winter Solstice* by Elin Hilderbrand: 4th book in the series. Takes place in Nantucket about a family that runs an Inn and winter stroll weekend.

A reader from Fitchburg read *Winter Solstice* by Rosamund Pilcher: With themes of loss, loneliness and unexpected love Rosamund Pilcher weaves a story set in the winter of the main characters lives. Descriptions are lush despite the season. I felt myself in need of a comfy sweater before long.

A reader from FOXBOROUGH read *Winter Solstice* by Rosamunde Pilcher: Lovely characters, beautifully written. Loved it!

A reader from Groton read *Winter Solstice* by Rosamunde Pilcher: My favorite winter book. I read this every year.

A reader from Lakeville read *Winter Solstice* by Rosamunde Pilcher: A favorite author and a favorite read is a wonderful antidote for the darkness. A story that reminds us of the importance of love, compassion, and friendship in our lives.

A reader from South Hadley read *Winter Solstice* by Elin Hilderbrand: This novel published in 2017 is the fourth book in Hilderbrand's "Winter Street" series. The author did a nice job writing about the complexity of modern family life, with sprinkles of humor throughout.

A reader from Woburn read *Winter Solstice* by Elin Hilderbrand: Loved this book — what a great ending to the series (i read 3 of the books in 3 days)! Cozy fictional dysfunctional family trying to tackle the holiday season on Nantucket. Last of 4 in a winter-themed mini-series; read the last few pages in tears.

A reader from PETERSHAM read *Winter Solstice* by Rosamund Pilcher: Believable, likable characters who collaborate to get good things accomplished.

A reader from Milton read *Winter Solstice* by Nina Maclaughlin: Series of essays blending personal observations with discussions and themes of literature. Her discussions of how winter makes people feel, and how cultures deal with it, was mildly interesting. It was good background on the Krampus. Overall it wasn't terrifically fun to read so the short length was appreciated.

A reader from barnstable read *Winter Solstice* by Nina Maclaughlin: Wonderful short essay celebrating the darkness that is the winter solstice and winter itself. Even within darkness, there is a lingering light that will keep us warm and lead us back to full light.

A reader from Fairhaven read *Winter Solstice* by Elin Hilderbrand: Easy read in author's typical style with the season being the one significant variance.

A reader from Middleton read *Winter Solstice* by Rosamunde Pilcher: Enjoyable story about families and relationships.

A reader from Hull read *Winter Solstice* by Rosamunde Pilcher: I saw this book on the January recommendations list, and chose it on the advice of several people. It is a cozy and ultimately heartwarming story, set in Scotland during the Christmas season. Every major character is dealing with some sort of loss, whether a breakup or the death of a loved one, and find solace, and ultimately emotional transformation, in each other's company. They also, in no small part, find healing in the beautifully described remote country setting itself. It was an enjoyable story. I only wish I had read it over Christmas! There was a lot of amusingly British dialogue, colorful local characters and a satisfying ending.

A reader from Lenox read *Winter Solstice* by Rosamunde Pilcher: A wonderful cozy story to warm a cold January. Set mostly in a rural area in the Scottish highlands the story links

together five people into a new family of choice and circumstances. It was a great feel good story without being sappy or filled with romance. The characters felt real with the story taking the point of view of each character at various times of the story.

A reader from Norwood (hometown), Lincoln (library location) read *Winter Solstice* by Nina MacLaughlin: This book (an extended essay) was a beautiful meditation on the winter season. As a former classics major, I loved the allusions to the Eleusinian Mysteries, Ovid, and Virgil, among others (there are also references to more “modern” writers like Dickinson and Melville, too). Interspersed with more cozy and bright imagery are both literally and figuratively dark moments, making for a thoughtful and complex read.

A reader from Melrose read *Winter Solstice* by Rosamunde Pilcher: Cozy winter reading at its finest! Such a delightful book to read where not much really happens but the evocative writing placed you right there in the Scottish highlands. I really enjoyed it as some light reading after some more traumatic, serious reads.

A reader from Brookline read *Winter Solstice* by Nina MacLaughlin: A hodgepodge of beautifully composed sentences, veering within individual paragraphs from memories to mythology to reflection to observations of nature. Read the addendum after finishing the body of the book, unless you'd like to encounter the most florid writing first. Note: as a collection of essays, can be used as a book for the April 2026 challenge instead.

A reader from Easthampton read *Winter Solstice* by Nina MacLaughlin: I really enjoyed the ways she described the cold and especially the darkness of winter as a necessary reminder of ending, the fullness of endings. Also enjoyed her writing about the importance of noticing the special qualities of the limited light we are granted and the light we see behind one's eyes and each other's.

A reader from Foxboro read *Winter Stories* by Ingvild Rishoi: *Winter Stories* is a trio of short stories set in icy Norwegian cities and countryside, where winter is ever present and unforgiving. One story follows a single mother and her small daughter wandering through town with almost no money, turning an ordinary shopping trip into a quiet moral crisis. Another centers on Thomas, a recently released prisoner trying to prove to himself and to his son that he can be more than his past. The final and most dramatic story tracks a teenage girl who secretly takes her younger siblings on a snowy escape, believing she can keep their family together on her own. Each story unfolds through tense, intimate moments, making the cold setting feel like an active force pressing in on the characters already fragile lives.

A reader from Franklin read *Winter Storms* by Elin Hilderbrand: "Winter Storms" is the 3rd book in Hilderbrand's *Winter Street Trilogy*. The trilogy follows the Quinn family. Although

Kelley and Margaret are divorced and married again, they have managed to remain friends and stay involved in their grown children's lives. Together along with their new spouses they support each other and their 4 children through life's storms.

A reader from Woburn read *Winter Storms* by Elin Hilderbrand: Loved this book! Cozy fictional dysfunctional family trying to tackle the holiday season on Nantucket. Third of 4 in a winter-themed mini-series.

A reader from Chelmsford read *Winter Storms* by Elin Hildebrand: I thoroughly enjoyed reading the Winter Series. One is drawn into the Quinn Family-this left me eager to finish the series to see how each of the family and friends turned out in the end.

A reader from Ludlow read *Winter Street* by Elin Hilderbrand: A cozy read, perfect for the holidays. I found it easy to read and light with an unexpected cliff hanger. I will be continuing the series!

A reader from Reading read *Winter Street* by Elin Hilderbrand: A quick read about the family who owns the Winter Street Inn in Nantucket. It takes place over Christmas as the family prepares for the inn's annual Christmas Eve party. I enjoyed this story but there were a lot of unresolved issues to entice the reader to read the next book in the series.

A reader from Barre read *Winter Street* by Elin Hilderbrand: The first book in the series *Winter Street*. The story takes place in Nantucket at a bed and breakfast. We are introduced to the Quinn Family. Each family member is dealing with major life changes, new baby, engagement, divorce, heartbreak, and legal issues. The one thing important to all of them is their family and being together during the holidays. The story ends with a cliffhanger. I will continue reading the series to follow each character's growth and development.

A reader from Topsfield read *Winter Street* by Elin Hilderbrand: A lot happens in a span of 3 days! And I am now very invested in the Quinn family.

A reader from Haverhill read *Winter Street* by Elin Hilderbrand: This was a light story and humorous at times. The characters were a mess, but in the end the family all supported one another and reunited.

A reader from Woburn read *Winter Street* by Elin Hilderbrand: Loved this book! Cozy fictional dysfunctional family trying to tackle the holiday season on Nantucket. First of 4 in a winter-themed mini-series.

A reader from East Falmouth read *Winter street* by Elin Hilderbrand: This was such a fun, cozy, winter read that depicts a beautiful, wintery Nantucket Island. Elin Hilderbrand books are like reading reality TV, and this was filled with twists and turns. I laughed a lot while

reading this book, and also enjoyed the winter setting. A great, fun, quick read to make you want to spend winter on Nantucket.

A reader from Ludlow read *Winter Stroll* by Elin Hilderbrand: I very much enjoyed the second book of the *Winter Street* series; readers get to know the characters a little more than in the previous book, the plot continues to develop and, as in the first books, ends as “to be continued....”

A reader from Woburn read *Winter Stroll* by Elin Hilderbrand: Loved this book! Cozy fictional dysfunctional family trying to tackle the holiday season on Nantucket. Second of 4 in a winter-themed mini-series.

A reader from Springfield read *Winter Stroll* by Elin Hilderbrand: I loved this book. It is a family story at Christmas on Nantucket. It is second in a trilogy. I took out the third one to read. There is fourth one that I will read next!

A reader from Orleans read *Winter The Story of a Season* by Val McDermid: This book felt like a warm hug and a permission slip to slow down! I loved the imagery and I’m now dreaming of a trip to Scotland. It really made me nostalgic for childhood and think about traditions. I will be doing a lot of reflection on traditions I want to bring into my family with my children.

A reader from Vineyard Haven read *Winter Wishes* by Fern Michaels: Pretty boring, but HEA.

A reader from Reading read *Winter: The Story of a Season* by Val McDermid: For those of us who find January a gloomy month after the lights and excitement of December, this is a wonderful book celebrating the joys of winter landscapes and Scottish customs. Ever since I read her first mystery novel, I’ve been fascinated by the location, Firth of Forth. This book reminds you that the light will return. Of course I was captivated by the cover, inside you’ll find drawings by illustrator Philip Harris.

A reader from Ashland read *Winter: the Story of a Season* by McDermid, Val: Very lovely! Made me want to experience a Scottish winter, which is remarkable given how chilly I am in Massachusetts. McDermid is funny and friendly, and shares quite a few childhood stories that make one feel warm and welcomed. I do recommend the audio--it's read by the author, and she's a fantastic narrator.

A reader from Chelsea read *Winter: The Story of a Season* by Val McDermid: The book is narrated by Val McDermid which is a nice treat. The imagery is beautiful, I love the idea of creativity in the winter. I checked out spinning silver for this challenge and really didn’t enjoy it, so I’m glad this was available just in time. It just came out January 13!

A reader from Wellesley read *Winter's Bone* by Daniel Woodrell: Daniel Woodrell's *Winter Bone* is an Ozark mystery tale, a where-did-he-go story, in which the snow sets the tone for the cold, unforgiving, relentless world in which the Dollies, Miltons, Haslam, and Blond Miltons. Her father, a meth chef, has disappeared and is wanted for bail. Her mother and young brothers depend on her. Ree's world is rural and isolated. In this corner of the world, there is a code of behavior that has been violated only Ree's not yet in on that secret. She acts to protect her family and unlock the mystery of what happened to her father. As she makes her way around the community of relatives to find out what happened, she gets caught out by snow and the cold weather repeatedly. She doesn't dress for the weather - long skirts offer little protection - and that reiterates the suggest that she is not prepared for the situation in which she finds herself. Woodrell uses realistic and specific language and descriptions of place. He does not describe snow as delicate or beautiful; snow is cold, slippery, or dangerous. The *Winter's Bone* tells if the mean, harsh snow - the kind that kills with frostbite and leaves a deep chill. It's not your let's-go-skiing-this-weekend kind of snow. I read this book on a snowy weekend, but the snow outside was nowhere near as cold as the snow in *Winter's Bone*. This is a beautifully written book that is so specific about the place it transcends to become a universal story about family, secrets, isolation, violence, and independence.

A reader from Boxford read *Winter's Bone* by Daniel Woodrell: Very well written. It made me feel cold just reading it.

A reader from East Sandwich read *Winter's Bone* by Daniel Woodrell: A very good read, and now I might see the movie!

A reader from Sudbury read *Winter's Bone* by Daniel Woodrell: Right now it's frozen outside here, but I think this book would make me feel frozen even if I read it in August.

A reader from Waltham read *Winter's Bone* by Daniel Woodrell: This country noir mystery was so well written, I felt chilled to the bone as I was reading about a teenager living in the Ozarks, raising her two brothers, and caring for her demented mother while looking for a father who skipped parole.

A reader from Florence read *Winter's Bone* by Daniel Woodrell: Woodrell's brief, harrowing novel of an Ozarks family torn apart by crystal meth will linger far past the time it takes to read it. Woodrell's sentences are sharply hewn to portray the 16 year old Ree and the little brothers she is trying to keep together in their family home, her often violent extended family members, and especially the mountain landscape as winter descends. Although the Oscar nominated film was darkly beautiful like the book, it can't have the same impact of Woodrell's stunning writing. Devastating, yet in the end, hopeful.

A reader from Boston read *Winter's Orbit* by Everina Maxwell: This book was so lovely! I signed up for space rom-com with taking-down-an-empire on a winter planet and got a really thoughtful depiction of finding love after surviving abuse, alongside some careful political shenanigans. Highly recommend!

A reader from Sharon read *Winter's Orbit* by Everina Maxwell: It was an enjoyable book even though it was a little different from what I normally read.

A reader from newbedford read *winterdance* by gary paulsen: An account of the author's novice experience running the Iditarod race in Alaska, complete with literal thrills, chills, and spills, puppy love, and beautiful scenery. Certainly full of wintry feelings!

A reader from WAKEFIELD read *Winterdance: The fine madness of running the Iditarod* by Gary Paulsen: Beautifully written, it captures the soul of the Iditarod, the love for the sled dogs, the life-changing experience of being at Nature's mercy. Very moving.

A reader from Reading read *Winterdance: The fine madness of running the Iditarod* by Gary Paulsen: This is a memoir of a man who falls in love with mushing (running) a team of sled dogs while augmenting his family income by setting trap lines in northern Minnesota. He becomes entranced with the idea of participating in the famous Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race and, as an amateur, goes about preparing for the 1983 race (when he is 43). Underfunded, ill-equipped, and lacking knowledge about the actual geographic conditions he will encounter, he manages to survive multiple harrowing events. He is physically and mentally tested and he makes poor decisions which lead to trouble for other racers. The writing is compelling as is the story. This book should be required reading in high schools to illustrate that the attitude of "just do it" isn't enough. Planning and training are important in achieving goals, especially if you want to come out in one piece.

A reader from North Andover read *Wintering* by Katherine May: So many people recommended this book to me, and they were right! A lovely way to reframe massive periods of growth and change as well as permission to honor the rhythms of the seasons as well as the rhythms of life. We will all have winters, and having the skills to navigate them helps.

A reader from Melrose read *Wintering* by Katherine May: Love her writing style - made me see this time of year in a completely different light.

A reader from Winchester read *Wintering* by Katherine May: This is a memoir/narrative non-fiction about the power of rest and retreat as part of the natural cycle of both our lives and the outside world. It's a good opportunity to reflect on the value of an underappreciated season!

A reader from Northampton read *Wintering* by Katherine May: fabulous book. I read it very slowly.

A reader from Arlington read *Wintering*: As a well-documented non-fan of winter, I really appreciated the perspective of this book. Putting it in the context of the cycle of nature and the benefits winter creates to allow for all that we love about spring and summer and then think about that in the context of our own lives was really thought provoking and inspiring.

A reader from Nashua read *Wintering* by Katherine May: This is a journey of the hard seasons of winter throughout a life. There are some inspirational moments, and moments to simply connect to another person who has weathered a storm.

A reader from Beverly read *Wintering* by Katherine May: This is a beautiful book about how to restore yourself not just during winter, but any time you are depleted, overwhelmed or feeling a little lost. She writes using her own experiences. It is funny, relatable, not precious and I wanted to start reading it again as soon as I finished it in case I missed something.

A reader from Bourne read *Wintering* by Katherine May: I finished *Wintering*, and it really stuck with me. It's a quiet, thoughtful book about getting through hard seasons without forcing yourself to be productive or "fine." I found it comforting in a very real way, like permission to slow down and just be where you are for a while.

A reader from Barre read *Wintering* by Katherine May: A very good book to help one deal with the cold and darkness of winter or those moments in our lives that despondency takes over.

A reader from Worcester read *Wintering* by Katherine May: A thoughtful read (or listen - did the audiobook!).

A reader from West Boylston read *Wintering* by Katherine May: A book about wintering as both a season and an emotional state. Explores the idea that winter as an emotional time will come and go through life much like seasonal winter does.....and rather than be fought against, can offer insight and moments of comfort.

A reader from Chicopee read *Wintering: A novel of Sylvia Plath* by Kate Moses: This is a novel from 2003 that fictionally recounts Sylvia Plath's final months in London in December 1962. It centers on the difficult winter Plath battled depression, illness, isolation, her husband's affair, her intense creativity, and her fight for survival.

A reader from SOUTH YARMOUTH read *Wintering: A Novel of Sylvia Plath* by Kate Moses: This is a beautifully written book, with lots of lovely details and descriptions, about the end of Sylvia's marriage to Ted Hughes and the winter she spent with her children in London

transitioning to life without Ted. I would recommend this book to anyone, but especially to fans of Sylvia Plath and her writing.

A reader from Beverly read *Wintering* by Katherine May: Conceptually, the book offers a powerful message particularly timely for sufferers of Seasonal Affective Disorder: winter is not simply a time of year but a state of mind. May — a somewhat ironic surname — details her own experience with 'wintering' which is never quite explicitly defined. Loosely, 'wintering' seems to be a state of paring down, of drawing one's collar to the cold, of the nadir. To experience winter is to experience a transformative hardship and that often comes with the cost of who you were before. Yet, despite such a compelling subject the book leaves much of the substantive details unexplored, offering tangents on sauna, bees, and robins but little in the true power that rest and retreat have on the wintering mind.

A reader from North Grafton read *Wintering* by Katherine May: The book was a bit boring for my taste. Not what I expected at all.

A reader from Worcester read *Wintering* by Katherine May: *Wintering* is a book about the transformative powers of winter, of rest and retreat. It is told from the perspective of the author's personal journey during a painful period in her life. and her ability to accept her sadness and find joy, nourishment and even encouragement in that process of rest and retreat she names wintering.

A reader from Maynard read *Winterkill* by C. J. Box: ... so many descriptions of snow, and navigating through it ...

A reader from Westwood read *Winterkill* by C. J. Box: Definitely a winter book: there is a big storm. I liked the book well enough, and had read the previous 2 books in this series. However, without any spoilers, there was a development that bothered me.

A reader from North Granby read *Winterkill* by C. J. Box: A beach read set in winter, the plot moves along and the icy cold wraps its chilly arms around everything it touches. The characters are challenged by notions of justice versus law versus government. Box conveys the conflicts of morality through the actions of the characters. Is it geography, lifestyle, influences, or inherent dispositions that inform outcomes? As Joe Jackson sang, "right and wrong, do you know the difference?"

A reader from Duxbury read *Winterkill* by Ragnar Jonasson: A thrilling mystery novel taking place in a snowy seaside town in Northern Iceland. It was easy to connect with the main character of the story, inspector Ari Thor as he investigates a gruesome death of a young girl. No spoilers but the book does keep your attention right up until the very last page!

A reader from Burlington read *Winterkill* by C.J. Box: I had not heard of this author or series, and so naturally I jumped right into the third book due to its winter theme. Knowledge of the past two entries is only slightly needed, and I was not lost at all. Here we have a mystery set in the midwest outdoors, a tough-guy hero who is not in law enforcement and happens to be a terrible shot, and subplots involving political injustice and a loving family. By the end of the book, I realized a key theme: when the snow is falling heavily, the plot is thickening nicely. I could draw several parallels with James Bond: Joe Pickett is unafraid of danger, is intimately knowledgeable about his expertise, trusts and becomes trusted by the right people, and somehow always finds his way right in the thick of drama. But I also could draw several perpendiculars: Joe Pickett loves his family, has no license for anything other than animals, would never bet his life away in a casino, and seems to be a generally good guy. There's plenty to like in the characterization, that this is a normal game warden who is easy to root for, who can easily see red and act out, but will do anything for what he thinks is right. He faces what amounts to a triple threat of antagonists here in a realistic plot that probably couldn't happen in any other setting. His supporting cast and potential Felix Leiter sidekick character are similarly well fleshed out. The villains might even be described as caricatures, somewhat unbelievable yet realistic manifestations of some perceived problem with society. Yes, this isn't the Cold War, but the subtle difference makes this one feel as fresh as the fallen snow. The writing is calm and methodical, which matches the midwest setting just fine. Even the action, of which is plentiful, seems underpainted and almost unimportant, which seems to fit. The description of details, for example hunting knowledge and a bit on falconry, becomes expected. Joe's inner monologue is probably the biggest highlight. I especially appreciate how meaningful change results from this plot; it isn't just another adventure in the snow, but something which will probably be referenced in following entries, the same way previous entries were continually referenced throughout. It's great to see the author not shying away from this. I liked it, but I didn't love it. I will have to keep reading, both before and after. Tough-guy hero stories are a weakness of mine, and I can't wait to experience more.

A reader from Groton read *Wintersong* by S. Jae-Jones: A lovely book with a classic fairy tale vibe, set in winter.

A reader from East Sandwich read *WINTERTIDE: SURVIVE AND THRIVE* by Brette Sember: This was a great read for anyone who has a harder time during the long winter months. Lots of ideas and suggestions to keep you busy and happy in winter. Also at the end of book the author lists a winter playlist, reading list, winter cookbooks, and a movie watch list. Check it out, you'll be surprised.

A reader from North Andover read *Wolf Winter* by Cecilia Ekback: The writing was absolutely gorgeous. Set in Swedish Lapland in 1717, a family moves to the remote Blackasen mountain. It is a dark, mysterious atmosphere full of foreboding and a sense of dread. The bleakness of the landscape reflects the bleakness of the characters. The magical realism was well done and formed a natural part of the story. I found the path to solving the mystery very intriguing.

A reader from Melrose read *Woodsong* by Gary Paulsen: I listened to this as an audiobook. It was read by the author. I enjoyed hearing about his personal experiences with sled dogs and other animals.

A reader from North Adams read *Woven By Gold* by Elizabeth Helen: I read the advanced reader copy of *Edelweiss*. It is a shifter romantasy and spicy! Think of a cross between ACOTAR and *Fourth Wing*. I rate it a solid 5 out of 5 stars.

A reader from Lee read *Wrapped up in Christmas Hope* by Janice Lynn: Great chick-lit.

A reader from Hopkinton read *Wrong Alibi* by Christina Dodd: Sadly, it was not very good. It was about a young woman who was framed for double murder in Alaska, and is attempting to clear her name.

A reader from Quincy read *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte: This book was just as sad as I remember it to be when I read it in college. I am rereading it for the movie, but I would rather have a snow day like the one we just had this past Monday than the one Mr. Lockwood experiences on the heath when he gets snowed in at *Wuthering Heights*. The stark landscape and winter scenes--both present and past--really add to the gothic, desolate feel of the book.

A reader from Haverhill read *You Better Watch Out* by James S. Murray: Slasher/Horror book about five people stranded in an unknown town. Readers try to figure out who is next, and who can be trusted. Sometimes what we think may not be as it seems!

A reader from Attleboro read *You Better Watch Out* by James S. Murray and Darren Wearmouth: Fast paced thriller set around Christmas with enjoyable twists.

A reader from West Springfield read *You Can't Spell Treason Without Tea* by Rebecca Throne: A cozy fantasy set in a grueling tundra landscape where an unlikely (and treasonous) couple open up a cozy shop to hide away from their problems. The descriptions of the tea/book shop were so amazing I wanted to cuddle up by the hearth and have some freshly brewed tea!!!

A reader from Boston read *You Weren't Meant to Be Human* by Andrew Joseph White: A book about a group of humans that have made a deal with aliens in Appalachia.

A reader from Tewksbury read *Yours For The Season* by Uzma Jalaluddin: This was a charming holiday love story full of family conflict and reconciliation and a joining of cultures. I enjoyed it very much.

A reader from Cambridge read *Yours for the Season* by Uzma Jalaluddin: A fun fake dating rom-com.

A reader from Northampton read *Yours for the Season* by Uzma Jalaluddin: A sweet and tender holiday romance as much about falling in love with your fake situation as it is about becoming your own person away from the identity and expectations your family may have placed on you. Set in Alaska, this was charming and at times laugh out loud funny, with great tension between the romantic leads Samara and Tom and realistic family dynamics and tug at the heart. Recommended!

A reader from Stoughton read *Yours for the Season* by Uzma Jalaluddin: Set during the Christmas season in Atlanta but mostly in Alaska, this fake dating rom com definitely had winter vibes!

A reader read *Yours for the Season* by Uzma Jalaluddin: This is a light and entertaining story that takes place in Alaska during the winter holidays. It has a bit of a Hallmark movie feel to it.