



### Books for Lunch Bunch – one thing leads to another

Our Books for Lunch Bunch chews through a lot of books in a month, and I only ever have room to discuss a few. A dozen of us met via Zoom and shared reading ideas. One theme emerging this month was how right Robert Frost was about “The Road Not Taken” when he says that “way leads onto way” opening us to some experiences as we pass others by never knowing what we missed.

Susan read **Eight Perfect Murders** by Peter Swanson. A bookseller creates a list of the most ingenious murders in fiction precisely because they are unsolvable. But a killer is apparently putting that to the test. Anthony Horowitz describes this book as “fiendish good fun.” And here’s how way leads onto way. Not only is running across Horowitz’s assessment a reminder that there are, no doubt, some wonderful books by him as yet unread, but the list used in *Eight Perfect Murders* is based on real literary mysteries, so there are eight books to check out.

Books as old as **Strangers on a Train** by Patricia Highsmith (1951) and as new as Donna Tartt’s **A Secret History** (1992) are on the list. Even those who weren’t enchanted with **The Gold Finch** (although I was) might love *A Secret History*.

Also on the list of *Eight Perfect Murders* happens to be a mystery – the only one he ever wrote – by A.A. Milne of Winnie the Pooh fame entitled **The Red House Mystery** published in 1922. For the curious, this book is on Kindle special for 99 cents or you can, of course, borrow it free through MeL. I’m curious to read the only mystery by Milne who turned down a lot of money to write a second one, and equally curious about *Eight Perfect Murders*.

I have to squeeze in **The Island of Sea Women** by Lisa See because Sue P. loved it so much and because Ruth called it “exhilarating.” Books for Lunch has been meeting for a lot of years and that’s the first time I recall someone calling a book exhilarating. It is historical fiction about a Korean all women diving collective, women who were in charge while men raised the children. The story covers the time period from the 1930’s to close to now.

See, according to the New York Times Book Review, “is one of those special writers capable of delivering both poetry and plot.” Following our way leads onto way thought, Deb had read another book by See, **Tea Girls of Hummingbird Lane**, another historical fiction story spanning many decades and showcasing the tea industry with all its exploitation of workers. A baby born to an unmarried tea worker is abandoned rather than killed as tradition called for,

and winds up adopted by a San Francisco family. I think we can count on a reunion with the birth mother.

Alice gets the prize for the most ambitious and romantic of book projects. She and her husband recently celebrated their 55<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary by buying 55 books that they will read together. I cannot put this idea out of my mind. What would my husband and I pick (or you and your spouse)? Would he pick a list and I pick a list and blend them? Would we agree quickly which books go on the list or debate it at length? Would we intentionally set out to read books that meant something to us each year we were married – or is that too big a project in itself to figure out? Would we make it to 56 after debating what we should read from the first 55? Or would we set out, as way leads onto way, down the new book path, choosing only books neither of us has read before? Congratulations, Alice! Let us know more about this, please.

Remember we are in Stage 3 of Reopening and the details of that are on the library's homepage at [wicksonlibrary.org](http://wicksonlibrary.org).

See you at the Library!