



What's new in July

Those who enjoy historical fiction know that there's a popular formula such as we find in **The Storyteller's Secret** by Sejal Badani. This book is on all the right best seller lists and sticks skillfully to the formula of starting with a current person's story – Jaya, a New York journalist. After a series of life trials including miscarriages, she takes a trip to her family's homeland, India. There she locates her grandmother's housekeeper and the real story begins. It involves her grandmother and historical events leading to India's independence from England.

Another historical novel that will make fans of the genre happy is **Mistress of the Ritz** by Melanie Benjamin. Blanche and Claude Auzello are mistress and master of the Ritz Hotel in Paris during WWII. Blanche is an American working for the French resistance culling information from the invading Germans who stay at the Ritz. The story is based on a real-life mistress at the Ritz and is loaded with intrigue and suspense.

A cozy mystery that has promise is **Dog Dish of Doom**, by E.J. Copperman. This is the first in a series concerning talent agent Kay Powell who deals in animal talent. Her client Bruno, of the canine persuasion, has owners who are difficult to deal with, and one of them winds up with a knife in his back face down in Bruno's water dish. Kay decides she cannot stand by and leave the police alone to investigate when she needs to protect Bruno's future.

The Mother-in-Law by Sally Hepworth isn't precisely a cozy mystery but it's a light one. A cranky mother-in-law, Diana, is found dead with a suicide note saying she just can't go on because of having cancer, except she doesn't (and didn't). It also happens she disinherited both her children before her "suicide" and a murder investigation ensues. Daughter-in-law Lucy feels a bit guilty she isn't sorrier about Diana's fate, and there's a list of suspects with a variety of motivations. (Maybe it is cozy.)

Now for a book by one of the greats, Joyce Carol Oates, **My Life as a Rat**. This title could mean a couple things but the right one is the "ratted someone out" definition. A quick synopsis shows that this is a book about ethical and moral dilemmas. "Which should prevail: loyalty to family or loyalty to the truth? Is telling the truth ever a mistake and is lying for one's family ever justified? Can one do the right thing, but bitterly regret it?" Our protagonist makes her decision and testifies against three brothers who committed murder. I would trust this to be a good story in Oates' capable hands.

We definitely should have an established series on our list, and Dean Koontz's latest Jane Hawk book, **The Night Window**, is a don't miss for fans of the ex-FBI agent protagonist. A Vegas mob boss, a homicidal sociopath, ordinary citizens standing up heroically, and Jane – sounds like the thriller it is.

Special Mention: This book isn't for everyone but in case it hits your reading sweet spot, I don't want to skip it. It's been on the shelves for six months. **Mouthful of Birds** by Samanta Schweblin is a collection of the weirdest, creepiest, don't-read-this-after-dark short stories ever. As one critic said, "The Grimm Brothers and Franz Kafka pay a visit to Argentina." The author is Argentine, so the book is a translation from Spanish. The title story is literal – but the problem it raises is intriguing. What does one do when the life and happiness of one's child depends on something stunningly weird? Sara's parents, one at a time, grapple with this issue. Each story I've read so far has one commonality – very strange people doing very bizarre things with a touch or more of the phantasmagoric. Those who will like it know who you are.

See you at the Library!

Upcoming Events: See our Website Calendar for all major Summer Reading events on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.