



Fireside Book Chats: Winter 2018

Leane's Top Fiction Read in 2017

Cannon, Joanna. *The Trouble with Goats and Sheep*. (2017) 10-year-old Gracie and her best friend Tilly look for a missing woman and for God. This quirky debut novel is remarkable for its structure, characterizations, pitch-perfect prose, touches of humor, and humanity.

Fridlund, Emily. *History of Wolves*. (2017) Living with her parents in a nearly abandoned commune, 14-year-old Linda finds herself changed by the arrest of a teacher and the secrets of a new neighbor family in a tale rooted in its natural Minnesota setting in a stunning debut.

Honeyman, Gail. *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*. (2017) For fans of *A Man Called Ove* & *The Rosie Project*, this is a lovely novel about loneliness and how a little bit of kindness can change a person forever.

Howard, Kat. *An Unkindness of Magicians*. (2017) FANTASY. In a wild ride to the satisfying finish, this dark tale of revenge among NYC's secretive magical elite features a rare magician with unmatched powers who resolves to destroy the system she unwillingly supports.

Mann, Susan. *The Librarian and the Spy*. (2017) ROMANCE. What fun! When her job entangles her in a mission to decode a priceless work of art before her enemies beat her to it, a librarian gets her chance to have an adventure like no other.

Miller, Louise. *The City Baker's Guide to Country Living*. (2016) Talented chef Olivia flees to a small inn in Vermont after a love affair ends in comic disarray. Miller's writing is descriptive enough to imagine Olivia in this setting, smell her pastries baking, and hear the music in the story.

Morrow, Bradford. *The Prague Sonata*. (2017) Told from multiple perspectives, this story centers on a young musicologist who comes into the possession of a mysterious 18th-century sonata manuscript and embarks on a search for both its composer and true owner.

O'Neill, Heather. *The Lonely Hearts Hotel*. (2017) Set in Montreal between the WWI & II, this is a spellbinding story about two gifted orphans. The simultaneously heartbreaking and life-affirming novel depicts the range of human experience through the eyes of a charismatic hero and heroine.

Shoemaker, Sarah. *Mr. Rochester*. (2017) A Must for Eyre fans and told from Rochester's point-of view, the author creates a stunning unreliable narrator, and adds bones to Rochester's background and depth to his feelings as he hires, woos, and weds our Jane.

Sullivan, Matthew. *Midnight at the Bright Ideas Bookstore*. (2017) This original debut novel will have particular appeal for puzzle solvers and booklovers. Lydia, as a child, witnessed a horrific crime. A suicide in her bookstore provokes a search for answers from her problematic past.

Towles, Amor. *A Gentleman in Moscow*. (2016) Deemed unrepentant by a Bolshevik tribunal in 1922, Count Alexander Rostov is sentenced to house arrest in a hotel across the street from the Kremlin, where he lives in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history unfold. This leisurely-paced story contains a fascinating and unique main character, as well as entertaining secondary characters.



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BEST SUSPENSE, THRILLER OR MYSTERY NOVELS

Christie, William. *A Single Spy*. (2017) Remarkable unreliable narrator Alexi begins as a Azerbaijani street rat and the story follows him through the hardships of his life to his forced recruitment as a WWII Russian spy behind enemy lines--non-stop pace, and compelling story crammed with exquisite historical detail.

Connelly, Michael. *Two Kinds of Truth*. (2017) Bosch is juggling a double murder during a robbery for his voluntary San Fernando job and the internal review of one of his more memorable past cases for the LAPD. No one integrates police work and the inner life of character as well as Connelly.

Delaney, JP. *The Girl Before*. (2017) This tale will spook you as a damaged young woman falls in love with the enigmatic architect who designed her residence, unaware that she is following in the footsteps of a doomed former tenant. Twisty turns and excellent unreliable narratives build suspense.

Hanson, Hart. *The Driver*. (2017) A debut thriller traces the experiences of an Army special forces sergeant turned limo driver who finds himself implicated in a murder, a situation that is further complicated by his crush on the case's lead detective. Gritty violence and bad language.

Harper, Jane. *The Dry*. (2017) This debut is set against a backdrop of the worst drought in a century, Melbourne-based federal agent Aaron Falk confronts the fallout of false alibis and a long-ago death when he returns to his hometown for the first time since he was a teen. Sequel will be out in 2/18.

Lockhart, E. *Genuine Fraud*. (2017) Imogen is a runaway heiress, an orphan, a cook, and a cheat. Jule is a fighter, a social chameleon, and an athlete. An intense friendship. A disappearance. A murder, or maybe two. A girl who refuses to give people what they want from her. A girl who refuses to be the person she once was. An truly intriguing unreliable narrative told in reverse chronological order.

Penny, Louise. *Glass Houses*. (2017) The 13th in her stellar Three Pines series, begins with an eerie apparition on the town green and has Gamache still trying to restore the Sûreté du Québec back to what it was before it was corrupted under the previous regime. Choices are made that will forever change our hero in ways we can only begin to imagine. The next book can't get here fast enough.

Perry, Thomas. *The Old Man*. (2016) Decades after taking millions of dollars during a mission in Libya and starting over in Vermont under a new name, former Army intelligence officer Dan Chase is forced back on the run after eluding two attackers with an interest in obtaining the loot.

Thoft, Ingrid. *Duplicity*. (2017) In her 4th outing, assigned to investigate a glitzy new church that is being sued for brainwashing allegations, gutsy Boston PI Fina Ludlow delves into the life of a prominent church member who has died under suspicious circumstances. Begin with *Loyalty* (2013) for consistently intriguing characters and plotting.

Tracy, P.J. *Nothing Stays Buried*. (2017) The Monkeewrench crew returns in their 8th novel to face the city of Minneapolis's worst nightmare—a rampant serial killer on the loose. Tracy's easy style keeps the action moving nicely to the satisfying conclusion and along with the ensemble of characters, reminds me why this is one of my favorite series.

345 main street, Wakefield MA 01880 • phone: 781-246-6334 •

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