

## Book Chat Notes

Zoom Meeting - April 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

### Titles Discussed\*:

**A Certain Age** by Beatriz Williams - It was the March book group title. We discussed it via email. The bestselling author of *A Hundred Summers* brings the *Roaring Twenties* brilliantly to life in this enchanting and compulsively readable tale of intrigue, romance, and scandal in New York Society, brimming with lush atmosphere, striking characters, and irresistible charm.

**City of Girls** by Elizabeth Gilbert – Set in the NY theatrical world beginning in the 20's. From the # 1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Eat Pray Love* and *The Signature of All Things*, a delicious novel of glamour, sex, and adventure, about a young woman discovering that you don't have to be a *good girl* to be a good person. Nancy said it is delightful and funny.

**Olive Again** by Elizabeth Strout. This is a sequel to *Olive Kitteridge*. Prickly, wry, resistant to change yet ruthlessly honest and deeply empathetic, Olive Kitteridge is “a compelling life force” (*San Francisco Chronicle*). *The New Yorker* has said that Elizabeth Strout “animates the ordinary with an astonishing force,” and she has never done so more clearly than in these pages, where the iconic Olive struggles to understand not only herself and her own life but the lives of those around her in the town of Crosby, Maine.

**The Reckoning** by John Grisham – Karen said it's the story of a World War II vet who returns home and kills his pastor. She didn't think it was the best Grisham. In a major novel unlike anything he has written before, John Grisham takes us on an incredible journey, from the Jim Crow South to the jungles of the Philippines during World War II; from an insane asylum filled with secrets to the Clanton courtroom where Pete's defense attorney tries desperately to save him.

### **All the Light You Cannot See** by Anthony Doerr. WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE

From the highly acclaimed, multiple award-winning Anthony Doerr, the beautiful, stunningly ambitious instant *New York Times* bestseller about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II.

**The Play of Death** by Oliver Potzsch. – The author's ancestor was a hangman. This is number six in the *Hangman's Daughter* series. Susan is reading through the series. I only read the first one, but it is great historical fiction. Here's a description of the series: Taking us back in history to a place where autopsies were blasphemous, coffee was an exotic drink, dried toads were the recommended remedy for the plague, and the devil was as real as anything, *The Hangman's Daughter* brings to cinematic life the sights, sounds, and smells of seventeenth-century Bavaria, telling the engrossing story of a compassionate hangman who will live on in readers' imaginations long after they've put down the novel.

**The Winter Sea** by Susanna Kearsley. A hauntingly beautiful tale of love that transcends time. A modern American woman travels to Scotland to write a novel about the Jacobite Rebellion—only to discover that the vivid scenes and the romantic hero she's imagining actually exist...

**Firebird** by Susanna Kearsley. Nicola Marter was born with a gift so rare and dangerous, she kept it buried deep. When she encounters a desperate woman trying to sell a small wooden carving called "The Firebird," claiming it belonged to Russia's Empress Catherine, it's a problem. There's no proof. But Nicola's held the object. She knows the woman is telling the truth.

**Teardrop** by Lauren Kate. *Teardrop* launches a new series from Lauren Kate, author of the #1 *New York Times* best-selling *Fallen* series. Haunting, mysterious, romantic and steeped in mythology, *Teardrop* is the epic saga of Eureka Boudreaux, a 17-year old Louisiana girl whose tears have the power to raise the lost continent of Atlantis . . . a world where everything you love can be washed away.

**Secret Book and Scone Society** by Ellery Adams. A librarian and a baker solving the troubles of a small town. *From New York Times bestselling author Ellery Adams comes the first in an intriguing new series set within a quirky small-town club where the key to happiness, friendship—or solving a murder—can all be found within the pages of the right book . . .*

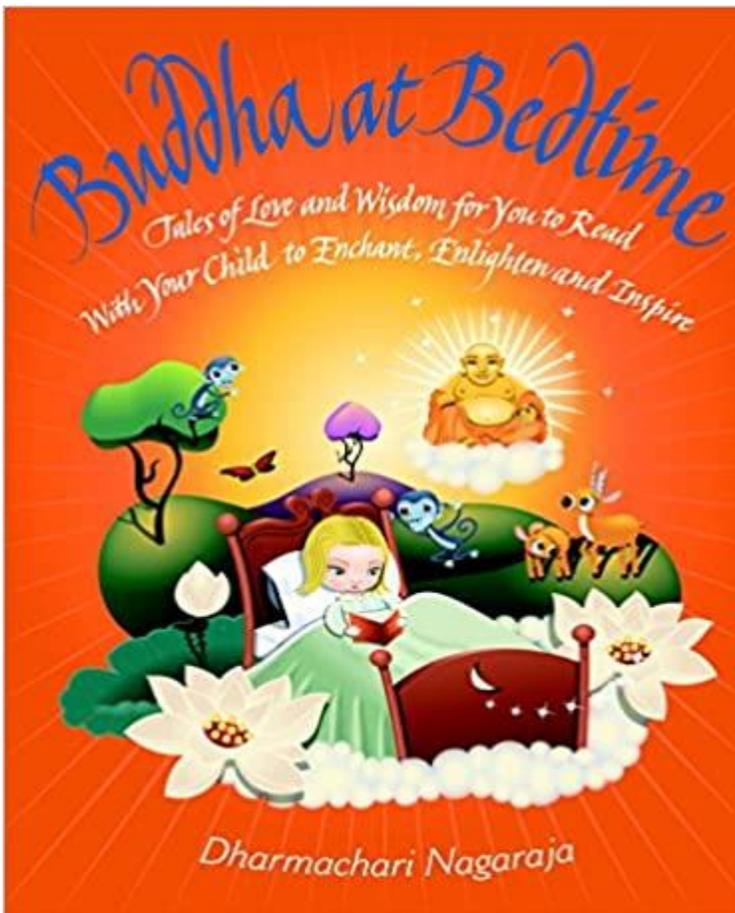
**Paper Son** by S. J. Rozan. This is the twelfth book in the Lydia Chin/Bill Smith mysteries. The Most Southern Place on Earth: that's what they call the Mississippi Delta. It's not a place Lydia Chin, an American-born Chinese private detective from Chinatown, NYC, ever thought she'd have reason to go. But when her mother tells her a cousin Lydia didn't know she had is in jail in Clarksdale, Mississippi—and that Lydia has to rush down south and get him out—Lydia finds herself rolling down Highway 61 with Bill Smith, her partner, behind the wheel.

**Inheritance: A Memoir of Genealogy, Paternity, and Love** by Dani Shapiro. In the spring of 2016, through a genealogy website to which she had whimsically submitted her DNA for analysis, Dani Shapiro received the stunning news that her father was not her biological father. She woke up one morning and her entire history--the life she had lived--crumbled beneath her. *Inheritance* is a book about secrets--secrets within families, kept out of shame or self-protectiveness; secrets we keep from one another in the name of love.

**Dead of Winter** by Annelise Ryan. This author at our library for National Library Week. She lives in Stoughton. This book is the tenth in the Mattie Wilson series. The first book is **Working Stiff**, but you don't need to read it to love Mattie Wilson and her fellow investigators and her son, Matthew. *Winters in Sorenson, Wisconsin, can be unforgiving. But it's murder that keeps Mattie and her family from settling into their new home . . . A new home, a new marriage, a new family. It's a lot to sort out. But before medicolegal death investigator Mattie can smooth out the unexpected chaos of her new life, duty calls. At the local ER, a battered and bruised teenage girl has been brought in by a mysterious man who claimed she'd fallen out of a car. The staff is suspicious, but while they attend to the teenager, the unidentified man slips out. Then the girl*

dies, but not before informing social worker Hildy Schneider that the man had her little sister as well.

**Empty Mansions: The Mysterious Life of Huguette Clark and the Spending of a Great American Fortune** by [Bill Dedman](#) and [Paul Clark Newell](#). We read this for book group in January 2019. Karen said it was fascinating. *Empty Mansions* is a rich mystery of wealth and loss, connecting the Gilded Age opulence of the nineteenth century with a twenty-first-century battle over a \$300 million inheritance. At its heart is a reclusive heiress named Huguette Clark, a woman so secretive that, at the time of her death at age 104, no new photograph of her had been seen in decades. Though she owned palatial homes in California, New York, and Connecticut, why had she lived for twenty years in a simple hospital room, despite being in excellent health? Why were her valuables being sold off? Was she in control of her fortune, or controlled by those managing her money?



**Buddha at Bedtime: Tales of Love and Wisdom for You to Read with Your Child to Enchant, Enlighten and Inspire** by Dharmachari Nagaraja. Larry has been reading this tales to our grandchildren via Skype. They are parables that teach good lessons for everyone. The tales are taken from Ancient Asian cultures and the book has beautiful illustrations. Each tale is short and ends with a moral or principle.

\*Heavily taken excerpts from Amazon

I hope you find a title you want to try. Thanks everyone for a fun discussion.

Dawn Hayslett, scribe.