

From The Front Porch 10.1.2020

[00:00:00] **Annie Jones:** [00:00:00] "With its red front door and casual crumbling. To fill it with some lamps and paper chains, To hear the thud of children songs at their lists ,to unclasp the thought of leaving, tie it to the door, to run into the gaping mouth of change and know it's suffering to find the ones to say, I am not afraid of sitting in the dark with you. Kate Baer - 'little miracles' "What kind of woman".

[00:00:29] I'm Annie Jones, owner of the bookshelf a independent bookstore in beautiful downtown Thomasville, Georgia. And today I'm recapping the books I read in September. I cannot believe this month is coming to an end. I am admittedly recording this a little bit early, just due to all kinds of scheduling things, but I still am at a loss that we are at the end of September.

[00:00:51] It feels ever so slightly like fall down here in Thomasville but, time is weird right now. And I feel like 2020 both is moving faster than I can handle and also will not be over soon enough knowing that 2021 is not going to be the magic fix, I think so many of us, I want it to be a. So what did I read in September?

[00:01:12] I read some really good books. I read a total of nine. The ninth one I'm in the middle of right now, but I'm confident I will finish before the end of the month. So let's dive right in. I read a pretty wide range, ranging over a few different genres, partly because I was reading in preparation for the fall literary lunch, where I was recapping or reviewing some of the books I wanted to highlight for the fall season.

[00:01:36] There are so many books right now that it's been hard, even as a bookstore owner to kind of keep up with everything, but we're doing our best. And so without further ado, here we go. The first book I finished in September is a young adult novel called "Recommended for You" this is by Laura Silverman.

[00:01:52] Interestingly. Yes, she is to Sarah Silverman. She is her sister. "Recommended for You" was recommended for me by Olivia our store manager. She read this one, she's kind of our children's lit expert. And so she read this why a novel before I did. The book is being sold. As you've got mail meets to all the boys I've loved before.

[00:02:11] And honestly, that's a high bar like that feeling. It feels like a lot of pressure for Laura, but I really like this book. I am comparing it to 10 blind dates. So some of you might be familiar with that young adult novel that at least last year in time for the holiday seasons. So "10 Blinds Dates" was to Christmas, what "Recommended for You" is to Hanukkah. So I really did fall in love with this book. The main character Shoshana is in high school, but I also really liked that this is a young adult book that doesn't really take place at school. Like school doesn't play a huge part because the book begins as winter break starts and Shoshana works at a mall bookstore, which made this book also have a nostalgic feel.

[00:02:57] It's not it's set in. Current times. And you can tell that because of some of the struggles that the characters face, particularly as they relate to technology, uh, but it still has an historic feel because it's set in a mall. So that's another thing I really liked about it was I felt kind of taken back in time to like, for me, it would be, would have been in Walden's

books or even Barnes and noble to some extent, but this is a small, independently owned bookstore in a mall.

[00:03:23] Shoshana works there and. Quickly kind of has this really hate though. Of course, those of us who love a good rom com know it will ultimately turn into love is hate relationship with Jake, uh, who you are welcome to picture as a Noah. Centenario you're welcome, but Shoshana and Jake kind of have a love story, but I also really liked that the book is not completely about that relationship.

[00:03:44] It's also about Shoshana loving her work. It's about her relationships with her friends, her relationship with her two moms who are in the middle. Of some relationship struggles of their own and Shoshana as a late teenager, you know, early adult is trying to figure out how best to handle that. That inks and that pain.

[00:04:04] So there's some heavy stuff here just in terms of what Shoshana is dealing with, but it's a very light book. Like it is kind of a cozy up, very similar to me in vibe to 10 blind dates. So I think if you're prepping your holiday reading recommended for you is I'll already. And I like it. I'm glad I read it now.

[00:04:20] You're welcome to read it now, but I think if you're the kind of person who like reads for the season, plans ahead, go ahead and stock up. I think this book should be shelved or. Put right alongside 10 blind dates one day in December, like that kind of cozy holiday reading. And I really liked that Shoshana has a car named Barbara Streisand.

[00:04:41] So there's just a lot to like about this book. I thoroughly enjoyed it. Olivia was absolutely right. Uh, she recommended it for me and I am now recommending it to you. It is called "Recommended for You" by Laura Silverman. Next step, a huge departure. I read Meghan Hunter's new book "The Heartbeat".

[00:04:59] Megan Hunter, if you're not familiar with her, I hope you will acquaint yourself because I read a book a few years ago called the end. We start from, it was almost more of a novella than a novel host. Apocalyptic took place in great Britain, like after this huge flood. Uh, but it was very much a book about motherhood.

[00:05:18] "The Heartbeat" is similar. In terms of writing. Like if you liked Megan, Hunter's writing in the end, we start from, I think you will love it in this. She's very consistent. She's a very poetic writer, but she's still dealing with themes of womanhood and motherhood, "The Heartbeat" centers around Lucy whose husband, Jake has just admitted an affair and they decide through a series of interesting circumstances and events that Lucy can exact three different punishments on Jake before.

[00:05:50] They have to kind of resolve their marriage. So they're going to stay married, but they also kind of have to put this behind them. And in order to do that, she, Lucy is allowed to punish Jake three different times. If that sounds like a weird premise that's because it is, but that's really what hooked me was that that idea that this relationship they would work on their relationship and choose to remain married.

[00:06:12] But first she would be allowed to kind of. Yeah to punish him for his behavior. So that's what hooked me. This book is weird. I just feel like I should get that out there. It's

weird and different, but I loved it. Like, I really liked this book because the writing is so strong. This is one of those books that I think will be like fire sermon by Jamie Quatro.

[00:06:32] That is a book I loved, but as so many of you communicated to me, uh, you did not. And that's totally fine and fair, but I love that book. I thought it was beautifully poetic. Really interesting themes. "The Heartbeat" is similar in that it is very poetic. It is toying with myths in a way that I really appreciated.

[00:06:50] So while the story is about Lucy and Jake, kind of in between these chapters about Lucy's different punishments, she's exacting. There is Lucy also reminiscing about her study of the Heartbeat, the Greek myth, the heartbeat. And if you are not familiar with that, I will let Megan Hunter acquaint you with that because I think she does a really good job.

[00:07:09] I will not try here to explain Greek myths to you, but that is, those are the really the two components of the book. The Lucy and Jake story, which keeps you, I think really grounded in reality. And then also this Greek myth of the heartbeat, which adds a sense of almost magical realism to this book. I'm not gonna go so far as to say that's what it is, but it, it certainly is headed in that direction a little bit, but the story of Lucy and Jake grounds it, that's why I love this.

[00:07:35] I love it. The writing style, I loved the themes it was dealing with. It is not only weird, but really dark. So this is not like a light. Like, I feel like you could take the same premise I just described to you and hand it off to Leanne Moriarty. And this would be a very different book. This is not that book.

[00:07:52] This is very literary, very dark, very twisty. My husband, Jordan actually is the person who was like, I think you should read this next. Like, sometimes he helps me pick what to read next. And he said, I think you should read this because it doesn't look dark. And I thought, Hmm, I've read Megan Hunter before.

[00:08:07] I think this is going to be dark. Like it's not some fun kitschy book, like standard deviation about a married couple. Which is fine. Like I love, as we all know, like I love those kinds of books, but this is fire sermon meets fates and Furies. And I do mean that obviously with the highest praise, I love both, both of those books.

[00:08:26] Um, but what Meghan Hunter is doing, I think is really original. Like I. I'm saying fire sermon and saying fates and periods, but I really don't know the last time I read a book like this, I think Megan Hunter is going to be one of those authors like Brit Bennett. I always pick up now. I think I can rely on her for beautiful prose written with a poet's touch though, which I think is really special.

[00:08:47] So I highly recommend this one. It is out on November 3rd. It's not yet. It is called "The Heartbeat". I will also tell you. Even if you're not interested in the book, go Google the book cover because I think the artists did a phenomenal job. I think this book cover is outstanding and beautiful and might attract a lot of people who might not otherwise pick it up.

[00:09:05] So this is "The Heartbeat" by Megan Hunter. And I'm also going to put a plug in for her previous work "The End We Start From", which if you haven't read it is well worth your

time. Next up and also inspired by our fall literary lunch. I picked up "His Only Wife" by Peace Adzo Medie. I love this book and good news for you.

[00:09:24] It's out already. If we're talking about pretty book covers, also, this one is gorgeous. Here's the interesting thing about this book. Two things grabbed me personally. The first is the opening sentence. Like. Which I think is even blurbed elsewhere. Like, I feel like I've seen it multiple places because it is so catching.

[00:09:42] The first sentence is "Elikem married me in abstentia. He did not come to our wedding." Yeah, that is such a good first chapter. I mean, first sentence. It it's such a good first sentence. So I pick this up, partly because of that first sentence. And partly because the blurb that I think appears on the final cover of the book is taken from a Kirkus review, which describes "His Only Wife as "Crazy Rich Asians" for West Africa.

[00:10:07] I think that's interesting and actually isn't entirely accurate. So, I instead of comparing this book to "Crazy rich Asians", I do understand that comparison. I'll get to that in a second, but I really think this is more like the book stay with me. This is not a light fun romp. In my opinion, there is an element of opulence here, which I think is where the "Crazy Rich Asians" comparison comes into play Afi, who is the main character of the book. She is being kind of forced by her family, into this arranged marriage. This book is set in Ghana. Afi is a young woman whose family is not particularly well. And the man she is being forced into relationship with is Elikem, who is very wealthy. And he also is in a relationship with another woman. He's not married to her, but his family.

[00:10:55] Disapproves entirely of this woman. And so they are really requesting that offi marry him in order to distract him and kind of take him away from his love interest. So I think there's some interesting elements there that I haven't really read about before, even though maybe stay with me deals a little bit with arranged marriage or, or a marital relationship.

[00:11:17] This book is doing something slightly different because you've got this male character who. Wants to do the right thing, but also is already in love with somebody else and already in relationship with somebody that his family does not approve of. And he kind of finds herself in the middle of this, but because of Ella Kim's wealth, she moves to the big city and leaves her small village moves to the big city.

[00:11:39] And I, again, I think that's where the "Crazy Rich Asians" kind of portion is coming from comparison is coming from. She finds herself kind of " working for a fashion designer. She really comes into her own in this marriage. And yet. Also finds herself deeply alone in her marriage. It is not the marriage she envisioned nor really is it the marriage she was promised again, I don't know that the " Crazy Rich Asians" comparison holds true.

[00:12:06] I think this book is like, stay with me. It is dealing with heavy topics, heavy subject matter, and I really. I think beautiful way. I really loved the writing in the book, but it is not particularly like light and fun. So just go into it with the right Headspace, I guess, is what I'm encouraging you to do as the reader.

[00:12:23] I adored this book, it's out already beautiful cover, really compelling characters who I, I think you really become attached to, particularly to Offy as she navigates this relationship. She really, she really had completely different expectations for, I highly recommend this one. I think it is well worth your time.

[00:12:42] I just want you to go into it, knowing what it is. I'm not saying the publisher did a disservice at all, because the cover is beautiful. I think the marketing is mostly been good, but it's just not to me. It's not crazy with patients. It's um, and I loved "Crazy Rich Asians", but this book feels a lot deeper than that if that makes sense.

[00:12:59] So that is "His Only Wife" by Peace Adzo Medie. Okay. Next up also kind of covered in our fall literary lunch. "What kind of Woman" by Kate Baer. This is a genre departure for me. This is a poetry collection. It's going to be a paperback original out November 10th. I believe so. I'm sorry, but I'm also not sorry, because this is a five star book.

[00:13:21] And again, gosh. I'm realizing as I'm going through this list, really good book covers all the way around, like not, maybe not every book as I'm looking. I'm like, okay, well maybe not. Every book is a great book cover, but most of these are really gorgeous. So they'd be very pretty on your shelves. And "His Only Wife" is going to be a great price point because it is a paperback original, but enough about that.

[00:13:38] Here's why I liked the book. So Kate bear, you may be familiar with her. I have come well, I would've come across her. Work in a lot of different ways, but I've actually been following Kate on the internet for a long time. She does not know who I am. She would not recognize my name. I've just been following her for years.

[00:13:55] And I kind of watched her start as a blogger and become a really. Oh, just a really moving poet. You may have seen her work online, both on her own Instagram, but also kind of re posted by a variety of publications and kind of famous internet personalities. Like I'm thinking of Joanna Goddard or somebody like that.

[00:14:14] So you may have already come across her work. This is a collection of both previously published work and or time being published work. I loved. Almost if you could see my copy. I loved almost every point in this collection. Like I really did love the entire collection, but I marked my copy is just utterly marked with my favorite lines.

[00:14:32] My favorite poems, I read one at the top because I wanted you to get, to get a sense of her work. I am hearing from my other bookseller friends who maybe weren't familiar with Kate prior to the book coming out, that she is a very accessible poet. And I would find that I would certainly agree with that because poetry is not my first Shaundra.

[00:14:49] It's not my first kind of most comforting level of reading, but I would compare it to, and I realize this is high praise, but I do mean it. I would compare it to window Berry, Mary Oliver really accessible about, uh, all of the poems are about. Motherhood womanhood. The book is divided into three sections and I think they covered some aspects of womanhood.

[00:15:10] So like the first part I think, is dealing with dating relationships. The second part, if I recall is dealing with maybe marital relationships or growing older coming into your own. And then the third section is about motherhood. And look, I am not a mother, but I found the third section to be just as beautiful.

[00:15:28] And just as compelling as the other parts of the book, I don't think you have to be a mother or married or even a woman to enjoy Kate's poetry. I. Just can't say enough really wonderful things. I also want to put a plug in from somebody who does care about poetry.

So our bookseller Laura is, um, much more, a much more avid poetry reader than I, and she also, we both got arc copies of this book.

[00:15:56] And she loved it. Um, so it is not just me, uh, who needs maybe more air quotes, accessible poetry. Uh, this is also for people who love the genre and appreciate the genre. I'm trying to think. Barbara Kingsolver also has a poetry collection out. I have not read it, but I have flipped through it. And I really liked what I've seen so far.

[00:16:16] And this is reminiscent of that. Like, I think there's some really great poetry collections that would make great gifts for holiday gifting or just for like, I actually think I might give, I have a couple of books that I give at baby showers to the mom. And I think this is one that I will add to that I will add to my.

[00:16:32] Gift giving. So it is called "What Kind of Woman" by Kate Baer. It is a paperback original poetry collection. Yeah. Out November 10th. And it is outstanding. I adored it and I highly, highly recommend it. Oh. And I just realized there is one more thing I want to say about this book, which is I fully intended to like save "What Kind of Woman", like throughout the fall, like to keep by my bed and read.

[00:16:54] You know, a poem every few days or something, which is normally how I read poetry. Instead I devoured this, like I sat and just read, I just read the poem straight through which don't get me wrong. I've now since gone back and revisited certain poems and made different markings and paid closer attention.

[00:17:12] But I, I couldn't believe that I finished this poetry collection when that is never in my life, how I have read poetry before. So that's just a heads up and something else kind of fun and delightful about Kate's work. Okay, then I read "Everything Beautiful in its Time" by Jenna Bush Hager. This is another book that I read in one sitting without really having the intention to do so a couple of Saturdays ago.

[00:17:35] I got off of work and put on a football game. So I like to read like in the background, like so that I can pay attention to the game, but I also have a good book to distract me if things go sour. So in a Bush Hagers book, I curled up on the couch with it. I. Thought I might like it because I read sisters first a couple of years ago.

[00:17:55] And really did. I really did like that book. I, um, that is a book written by Jenna and her twin sister Barbara. And regardless, most of your politics, I think that book is really fun. And if are, if you are sisters, then it. It is even more fun. Um, I don't have sisters, but I thoroughly enjoyed that book, her new book, "Everything Beautiful in its Time", which I'm sure you probably have seen is about her grandparents and not just her famous grandparents, but also her mother's parents.

[00:18:22] And it's about her relationship. It's also, I don't think I realized this when I picked it up. It's also really a book about grief. Jenna Bush Hager lost three or four grandparents in the span of like, I don't know, 12 or 14 months. I grew up very close to both sets of my grandparents. And I found myself both laughing hysterically.

[00:18:41] Like Jordan was, I think, a little bit taken aback. I was reading this book. And he had asked me what I was reading and then I was laughing. Cause Jenna, I think is a really funny writer. Actually. She has some really funny stories in a funny way to share those

stories. And so I would catch myself laughing and Jordan would be like, what, what is so funny about Jenna Bush Hager at her memoir, but she tells these funny stories about her family and about her kids.

[00:19:05] I mean truly, there were a couple of chapters. I could tell you the scenes of where I just really sobbed like a good cleansing cathartic kind of sob. She just writes really lovingly and tenderly about her grandparents. And as someone again, who grew up in close relationship with her grandparents, I found this book to be really moving and really, really sweet.

[00:19:29] Sentimental, I think is a word that a friend of mine use. I really like this book again. I think this one would be wonderful for gift giving. There are a few books that we at the bookshelf recommend if you are experiencing or trying to gift a book to somebody who is grieving. And this sounds so strange, I think, but I really would recommend "Everything Beautiful in its Time".

[00:19:52] She is talking about loss in a, I think really vulnerable way. And then also very funny pointing away. So this is "Everything Beautiful in its Time". I will say the same thing that I said regarding system there's first. This is a book that I think could be enjoyed regardless of your politics. I found it to be very accessible.

[00:20:12] I've recommended it to a lot of people already. I think it'd be interesting to read even with a book club. It's not like it's packed with the dense information for you to kind of chew on together, but I think it would be a lovely conversation to have with people in your life about, about their relationship with their grandparents or their relationship with their family and what that looks like and the different things that.

[00:20:32] Have made an impact on it. I officially want to own a Lake house in Maine. It's fine. I'm or a beach side cottage. I also kind of want to be friends with Jenny Barbara Bush. Like I didn't really know that that was something I wanted, but I think it is. So anyway, "Everything Beautiful in its Time" by Jenna Bush Hager really enjoyed that one really highly recommend.

[00:20:53] I followed that book up with "Just Like You", Nick Hornby. I liked Nick Hornby a lot, but it has been okay. A while since I've read a book by him. So this is a new one out at the end of this month, actually, probably by the time you hear this, now that I think of it, it released on September 29. Again, I like Nick Hornby, I've read a few of his books and really liked them.

[00:21:12] You may be familiar with the film adaptations of his work. I think about a boy fidelity, that kind of thing. Um, this is his latest. And look really liked this book a few years ago, a few years ago, one year ago, two years ago, I read the book by Diana Evans called ordinary people. I think "Just Like You" would make a lovely companion for, for Diana Evans, ordinary people.

[00:21:36] So, "Just Like You" is about a biracial couple. They are dating and she is in her forties and he is in his mid twenties. I was also at the same time, I was reading this book, watching younger, uh, highly recommend on TV land. And so I think that's part of the reason I love this book. "Just Like You" is very much a love story between these two characters and how they kind of grapple, um, both with.

[00:22:02] Racial identity, class identities, and then also just their age difference. So there's a lot happening, but Nick Hornby, I think he handles it really well. I would like to say I was very hesitant. I did, I did not know if it would be handled well, but it was. Um, and so the book is really about their love story.

[00:22:19] But this is also a Brexit novel, which if you had told me at the beginning of the month, that I would love a novel about Brexit, I would have thought you were wrong. But here's what I liked about it. I don't know that I have done a ton of research about Brexit and what it means. I mean, I think I know generally.

[00:22:36] Speaking based on news articles and things like that, podcasts, but this is the first time I feel like I've read a book that examines what 2016 looked like for the British versus how I right. Have been viewing what 16 looks like for Americans and for our country and for kind of the repercussions that we've been facing.

[00:22:55] Again, wherever you fall, we've been facing repercussions from 2016 for the last four years. So. It was interesting to pick up a book that kind of flipped that on its head and really examine it through the lens of great Britain and what Brexit meant to them and what that election meant to them. I did not know that I needed that, but I think I really did.

[00:23:15] I needed outside perspective on America, and I also wanted some new found perspective on what's happening somewhere else in the world. And what, I don't know what's going on and on a micro level, how that affects relationships. So. I think part of the reason I found this book to be so enjoyable was that it is very much a book about Brexit and a book about British people and living in a post 2016 world.

[00:23:41] Uh, but it is also. A love story at its heart. And so you get this really sweet, interesting love story that kind of grounds the book and, and doesn't make it so heavy about Brexit. Like it's very much a Brexit book, but you don't get lost in those details. Um, the book starts in kind of 2015 and kind of the lead up to the 2016 election, um, the 2016 election for them.

[00:24:04] And then there are some references to the 2016, uh, American. Election. But again, I really liked this book is about great Britain and it's about England and it's about London. The it, the book is set in London again, highly recommend for fans of Diana Evans, ordinary people. I think the books could be read side by side with one another.

[00:24:23] I want to kind of set some expectations for you as a reader. This book is quiet. I find that to be true of a lot of British fiction. Maybe I'm wrong about that? I hope I'm not just stereotyping, but I feel like my personal experience has led me to believe that British literature is just quieter literature.

[00:24:38] So, this is very much a book about a couple. This is, there is nothing huge or bombastic that happens in this book. It is just kind of giving you a bird's eye view and then an up close view of what one relationship looks like and how an election affected it, but also how their different views and worldviews and stations in life affected it.

[00:25:03] So highly recommend really like this one, just go into it, knowing this isn't like a romcom. Per se this is more a Brexit novel with a love story at its center. I really liked it. A go

Nick Hornby had been while since I'd read one by him that I really liked. So "Just Like You" by Nick Hornby. Okay, next up, I read a book called "Scandalous Witness" by Lee Camp.

[00:25:24] This is a book written by a Christian professor written for Christians about politics. So this may not be for you. And that is totally fine, but I did want to mention it for those who might be interested. It is a thin little book, which makes it look super easy. This is not easy reading. Uh, Lee Camp is a professor and so the book is very academic.

[00:25:44] Like I literally read it with my phone in my hand so that I could. Google words so that I could, I could look up definitions of words, but if you are like me and find yourself asking a lot of questions and feeling a lot of feelings and not quite sure what to think about a variety of things. Yeah. I think this book is for you.

[00:26:08] And that's a really vague way to say it, but I think amongst my friends in my, in my real life and in my life at the store and outside the store, I am having really interesting conversations on a variety of levels. And I think "Scandalous Witness" was the perfect book for me to be reading right now. My family is.

[00:26:25] Actually reading it as our family book club book, where we're all going to be discussing it on a zoom call in October. That's definitely why I read it, but I hope I would've read it anyway because I found it to be both extremely validating and convicting and comforting. So it left me very much feeling those three things.

[00:26:45] I did not agree with everything Lee Camp had to say, but I also found myself nodding more often than not. I marked my copy up. I have so much to talk with my family about, um, so much to talk to Jordan about, um, because it also raised a lot of questions for me, but that's why I read books a while ago. I think somebody's question one of the books I was reading on Instagram and questioned why I had read the book or something like that.

[00:27:09] And I, you know, I like to read a wide range of things so that I can figure out what I think. And that doesn't mean everything I read. I agree with, but it also, I don't know. I want to read widely and I want to read a wide range of things so that I can figure out what I think. Anyway, I highly recommend if you are particularly a Christian person who finds yourself, Not even in a different stage of your life politically, but just maybe asking more questions than before maybe wondering what the Christian's role is in government.

[00:27:41] And I don't know if these are questions other people are asking, but these are definitely questions I'm asking. And so if you find yourself like me, a little confused and a little lost, I really do recommend a "Scandalous Witness". The thesis statement. If you need one to kind of convince you one way or the other, if this is for you, his thesis statement is really that.

[00:27:58] Christianity is a politic and it is neither left nor right. Nor religious. Okay. So that's his, that's his premise. And again, you may or may not agree with it. Again, I had questions and things that I was left feeling like I didn't quite agree with him, but then other things I really did. So it is called "Scandalous Witness".

[00:28:16] It is by Lee Camp and I really, I really am grateful for his work. I really am. Okay. Then I read a total departure book in all kinds of ways. I read a book called "Evil at Lake

Seminole" by Stephen Epstein. I read a lot of really good books. I read a lot of well-written thoughtful fiction. Yeah. I read a lot of thought provoking nonfiction.

[00:28:40] And I also love finding freedom about Meghan and Harry. And I also love the occasional true crime like Ann rule. So this book is a true crime book. The reason I picked it up, first of all, the author, Stephen Epstein reached out to me to be on from the front porch and he is going to be going to be on a Patrion episode later.

[00:28:59] Um, I think in October, but. You know, I get the occasional requests and the bookshelf gets the occasional request for both in store, author events, and also for podcasts or virtual events or whatever. And. I don't know if I really would have thought much about this because Stephen Epstein is not a local author.

[00:29:18] He is not local to Thomasville nor Tallahassee. And so generally this might be a book I would have passed on, except this book is all about a murder that took place in Tallahassee. It was the murder of Mike Williams. You may or may not be familiar. I do think it made its way to Dateline and things like that.

[00:29:36] He was suspected of having drowned in Lake Seminole back in the early nineties. And instead just a couple of years ago, it was discovered that he was murdered by his best friend. And the murder was planned by his then wife. They were still married at the time. It is a bunker story. Do look it up. Yup. But I was drawn to this and immediately kind of emailed Stephen Epstein back because I have been familiar with this story for a long time.

[00:30:02] Uh, as a kid, like as a teenager, I read the Tallahassee Democrat. That's the newspaper there, uh, religiously. And I came across columns about Mike Williams disappearance. Mike Williams was also a graduate from my high school and stuff. So he and I went to the same school. He graduated. Many years before me, but still there's a connection there.

[00:30:22] I went to a small high school, so connection. And so I picked up this book, "Evil at Lake Seminole" with the intention of reading it and talking to Stephen Epstein for a Patrion episode, if you like true crime, I actually really did like this book. Now my love for it and appreciation for it, I think is probably coming from a place of familiarity with the subject.

[00:30:41] Like I recognize Jordan, Jordan Genesis compared it to like our reading experience of furious hours and what we mean by that. And what he meant by that is when we read furious hours by Casey SEP, he and I both immediately, like we knew where like Martin was, we knew the roads she was talking about. And so certainly there is an element of that in eval at Lake Seminole.

[00:31:03] Like I know where all of these landmarks are. I know that high school, I went to that high school. I familiar with FSU campus. So there's all kinds of things there that certainly lent a familiarity to the subject matter. But I also think for true crime, this is really good. Again, if you like crime. So if you liked the Ted Bundy book yeah.

[00:31:21] By Anne rule, that's really what I'm talking about. When I say true crime, this is not high literary. This is not. Even necessarily, like I'll be home in the dark level. This is yeah. Book. You want to curl up and read because you're staying at somebody's Lake house and it's on the shelf. Does that make sense?

[00:31:38] And I mean, that, I mean that by the way, in a complimentary way, that's exactly how I felt while reading the book, I just felt kind of lost in it. Uh, like John Grisham, John Grisham meets kind of pulpy. True, true crime. So it's called "Evil at Lake Seminole". It's by Stephen Epstein. Uh, I really liked it.

[00:31:53] You'll hear more about him. If you support us on Patreon. And then the last book I'm reading this month, I think it's going to be my last book of the month is Cobble Hill by Cecily, Yvonne, I guess there, I think is how you pronounce it. If you recognize that name at all, I may have butchered that name I think is right.

[00:32:09] Um, she is the writer of Gossip Girl, uh, but this is a novel for adults and I'm reading it right now. It's called Cobble Hill it's because it is set in the Cobble Hill neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York. If you liked Modern Lovers by Emma Straub. I think this is going to be right up your alley. I really am about 50 to a hundred pages in, and all of the characters are really quirky and interesting so far.

[00:32:33] I think I would compare this to, yeah. Modern Lovers meets a book. I read a few years ago called The Arrangement just because of the characters. We're talking very wealthy, affluent, New Yorkers and hipster culture, I guess, for lack of a better term is that's still a term we're using. I don't know, but I really like it.

[00:32:52] And I liked it or loved it a lot. I'm using that one as an exact example, because again, that book had a very neighborhood, character driven feel to me. So specifically. Yes, if you like Emma's job, but really if you like that book by Emma Straub, I think you will like Cobble Hill. Jury's still out on like my final rating and what I'm thinking, but I will say the characters are really interesting and quirky and compelling.

[00:33:15] I'm thinking about the characters I have loved from Misfortune of Marian Palm from Standard Deviation, from The Arrangement, these characters who live in a world really very much unlike mine. Uh, but for some reason I find myself really drawn to them and drawn to their problems. Um, I think there's a hint of like dysfunctional family lit here, although it is more about each kind of family in their own pocket.

[00:33:40] I think there's going to be some overlap with relationships, but it's really each family and a look at this kind of neighborhood in Brooklyn, New York. So really like it so far, it is called Cobble Hill by . Those are the books I read in September. I would love to hear what books you read in September. We are, there are new books coming out every week.

[00:34:00] That's not unusual. That's the statement I could have made in 2019, but there are so many books, Olivia and I, and the rest of the bookshelf staff are kind of blown away by how many books are releasing. And we know that's because of COVID and kind of publishing dates, changing and things being pushed back and move forward.

[00:34:17] So it is hard to keep up. So I'm curious how you're doing. Uh, with your reading and in your reading life, how you're keeping up and what you're reading and what's grabbed your attention. Because I think some of us too are still kind of struggling with books that kind of grab us and hold onto us. And the good news is I look back at this list of nine books and all of these books were really good.

[00:34:34] I think that's right. It's the good news about COVID-19 and its effect on my reading life. I am far less patient with literature right now. Meaning if I don't like it, it is way easier right now for me to just put it down and take it to the little free library and not pick it back up. Yeah. I used to really give books a lot of second chances.

[00:34:51] And right now I find I'm not doing that so much. And the good consequence of that is what I am reading. I really, truly love and enjoy. So I hope you get some good reading ideas. I hope your reading life is making it through these unusual days. And, uh, yeah, we'll see you next week.

[00:35:06]