

Kathleen's Recent Reads—September

Fiction

Big Lies in a Small Town by Diane Chamberlain

Despite not having experience in art restoration, a young woman with a troubled past is asked to restore a WPA-era mural thought to be lost. As she works to correct the damage, she becomes intrigued with the fate of the original artist. The stories of the two women alternate between chapters until reaching a satisfying conclusion. A good choice if you like historical fiction or books about art.

The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison

One of the most challenged books of the last decade for its depiction of child sexual abuse, *The Bluest Eye* is certainly a difficult book to read, and may be triggering to people suffering from PTSD. However, the violence is far from gratuitous, as Morrison tenderly exposes the wounded humans behind monstrous behavior, and explores generational trauma in addition to America's obsessions with very narrow standards of beauty and acceptability. Like all great literature, this masterful first novel from a Nobel laureate has the power to help us understand one another, and to help us process the horrors in the world.

The Midnight Library by Matt Haig

Nora Seed has many regrets. About abandoning a swimming career and disappointing her father; walking away from a rock band when a contract is on the line and disappointing her brother; not moving to Australia and disappointing her best friend; canceling her wedding at the last minute and disappointing her fiancé. Weighed down by a sense of failure and “situational depression”, Nora hits bottom after being let go from her job and losing her cat, and decides she no longer wants to be alive. But rather than die, she winds up in the Midnight Library, where all the stories of her life are written, and she has the chance to see *what if*. Comforting and immersive, a good choice for fans of *A Man Called Ove*. A Book Club Selection.

The Other Emily by Dean Koontz

Successful writer David Thorne is haunted by the disappearance of his lover 10 years previously, who was presumed abducted by a serial killer but whose body was never found. Without revealing his motive, Thorne begins interviewing the killer in prison to try to learn the whereabouts of Emily's remains. Then one night, he meets a woman who appears to *be* Emily. A suspenseful page-turner combining elements of romance and sci-fi.

Vera by Carol Edgarian

Historical fiction centering on a young woman, the daughter of a brothel owner and raised by a foster mother, who after surviving the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, must make a new life for herself. A Book Club selection.

Audiobooks (available on cloudLibrary)

The Alice Network by Kate Quinn

Historical fiction. Just after WWII, a woman who served as a spy for England in occupied France during WWI is drawn back into her past when she agrees to help a young American woman find her missing cousin. Harrowing and compelling.

Fake Accounts by Lauren Oyler

In a voice simultaneously self-deprecating and self-aggrandizing, an unnamed narrator who writes for an online magazine overshares in a particularly millennial manner. Snarky, witty and wry.