

Kathleen's Recent Reads—May 2023

Fiction

Murder at Greysbridge by Andrea Carter

The latest in the Inishowen mystery series finds Ben O'Keefe attending a wedding at a luxury hotel when the body count begins. Ben is at an emotional crossroads, contemplating a job offer overseas, and the arrival of her estranged partner Tom Molloy--called in to lead the investigation—further complicates matters. The characters and Irish settings are the big appeal factors in this series, and this book offers the additional lure of the country house murder.

Our Missing Hearts by Celeste Ng

At an unspecified time in the future, after an economic crisis similar to the Great Depression, Americans live under PACT—the Preserving American Culture and Traditions Act—and people of Asian descent are at continual risk of arrest and having their children “re-placed”. Books that do not align with PACT are removed from shelves. After a line of her poetry becomes the rallying cry of the resistance, Margaret Chu, the mother of 12-year-old Bird, leaves her family to go underground; Bird's father loses his position as professor of linguistics, and Bird and his father must disavow Margaret in order to keep what remains of the family together. While still concerning itself with Ng's familiar themes of family and love, her latest novel is a reminder of how quickly intolerance can catch fire and turn our world upside down, and her calm, measured descriptions of this dystopian America are chilling.

Audiobooks (available on cloudLibrary)

An Island Wedding by Jenny Colgan

In Colgan's charming Isle of Mure series, set on a fictional island off the coast of Scotland, favorite characters Flora, Joel, Lorna and Saif all return, trying to find ways to heal and leave the past behind, and make their needs known. There is beauty, joy, and an unexpectedly bittersweet ending. Cozy and heartwarming as a hug.

Dear Life by Alice Munro

This short story collection by the Canadian Nobel Laureate is simply outstanding. Domestic life, family dynamics, the constraints of mid-twentieth century expectations on women are all examined unflinchingly in spare, precise prose.

Spare by Prince Harry

It is a novel experience to hear the life story (so far) of a prince of England told in his own voice, but the thing that stands out in this memoir is how deeply traumatized Harry has been by his dysfunctional family and by the actions of the British press. Ghostwriter J. R. Moehringer does a fine job of helping tie the various threads together into a compelling whole. Recommended for royal followers and history buffs alike.