

Recent Reads December 2025

Fiction

The Secret Christmas Library by Jenny Colgan

Two rare book specialists are invited to a crumbling castle in Scotland to help find a hidden treasure. To their dismay, finding the book will be much like finding a needle in a haystack—thousands of square feet of castle are stuffed with thousands of books—a task not made easier by a power outage caused by a blizzard that cuts the castle off from civilization, just a Christmastime. Intriguing characters in a cozy (despite the cold) environment make for perfect winter reading.

Audition by Katie Kitamura

A middle-aged actress, struggling with a complex part for a new production, encounters an unwanted and unforeseen complication when a young man tracks her down, claiming she is his mother. Despite her claim to be no one's mother, he persists, insinuating himself into both her personal and professional life. The first person narrative adds to the sense of unease: who *is* this woman, and can she be trusted? And what about the young man, whose motives seem to change as the novel progresses? This elegant and slim work raises a disproportionate number of questions. Perfect for readers who favor character over plot, and enjoy books about characters' interior lives.

Audiobooks

The Body in the Library by Agatha Christie

The body of a young woman with no obvious connection to the inhabitants is found in the library of the country estate of Colonel and Mrs. Bantry. The plot thickens when another young woman is found dead in a nearby location, but count on Miss Marple to figure it all out. Despite being published over 80 years ago, this mystery holds its own, and Christie's work continues to serve as the standard. If you love mysteries and have never read Agatha Christie, now is the time to start!

The Phoenix Ballroom by Ruth Hogan

Venetia Hargreaves finds herself at a loss after the death of her husband, to whom she devoted her life—and, in the process, suppressed her own sense of self. The behavior of her son does not help matters any; believing her unfit for living on her own, he advertises for a live-in companion/granny-sitter for his mother. Venetia must prove to him, the world, and herself that she is not only capable, but has something unique to offer even at her "advanced" age, and the opportunity presents itself in the form of the ballroom where she taught dance classes as a young woman. Try if you love books about second chances.