

DBC Book Club

Selected Books Jan. – June 2023

January 11

The Last Flight: A Novel, Julie Clark (Mary)

Claire Cook has a perfect life. Married to the scion of a political dynasty, her home is elegant, her days flawlessly choreographed, and her future auspicious. But behind closed doors, nothing is quite as it seems. That perfect husband has a temper and he's not above using his staff to track her every move. What he doesn't know is that Claire has worked for months on a plan to vanish. A plan that takes her to the airport, poised to run from it all. But a chance meeting in the airport bar brings her together with a woman whose circumstances seem equally dire. Together they make a last-minute decision.

The two women switch tickets, with Claire taking Eva's flight to Oakland, and Eva traveling to Puerto Rico as Claire. They believe the swap will give each of them the head start they need to begin again somewhere far away. But when the flight to Puerto Rico crashes, Claire realizes it's no longer a head start but a new life. Cut off, out of options, with the news of her death about to explode in the media, Claire will assume Eva's identity, and along with it, the secrets Eva fought so hard to keep hidden.

February 8

The Mystery of Mrs. Christie: A Novel, Marie Benedict (Linda)

In December 1926, Agatha Christie goes missing. Investigators find her empty car on the edge of a pond, the only clues some tire tracks nearby and a fur coat left in the car on a frigid night. Her World War I veteran husband and her daughter have no knowledge of her whereabouts, and England unleashes an unprecedented manhunt to find the up-and-coming mystery author. Eleven days later, she reappears, just as mysteriously as she disappeared, claiming amnesia and providing no explanations for her time away.

The puzzle of those missing eleven days has persisted. With her trademark historical fiction exploration into the shadows of the past, Marie Benedict brings us into the world of Agatha Christie, imagining why such a brilliant woman would find herself at the center of such murky historical mysteries. What is real, and what is mystery? What role did her unfaithful husband play, and what was he not telling investigators?

March 8

Just Kids, Patti Smith (Pat)

It was 1967. The summer Coltrane died, the summer of love and riots, and the summer when a chance encounter in Brooklyn led two young people on a path of art, devotion, and initiation.

Patti Smith would evolve as a poet and performer, and Robert Mapplethorpe would direct his highly provocative style toward photography. They traversed the city from Coney Island to Forty-second Street, and eventually to the celebrated round table of Max's Kansas City, where the Andy Warhol contingent held court. In 1969, the pair set up camp at the Hotel Chelsea and soon entered a community of the famous and infamous—the influential artists of the day and the colorful fringe. In this milieu, two kids made a pact to take care of each other. Scrappy, romantic, committed to create, and fueled by their mutual dreams and drives, they would prod and provide for one another during the hungry years. *Just Kids* begins as a love story and ends as an elegy. It serves as a salute to New York City during the late sixties and seventies and to its rich and poor, its hustlers and hellions. A true fable, it is a portrait of two young artists' ascent, a prelude to fame.

April 12

The Silent Patient, Alex Michaelides (Suzanne, Linda, Sharon G.)

Alicia Berenson's life is seemingly perfect. A famous painter married to an in-demand fashion photographer, she lives in a grand house in one of London's most desirable areas. One evening her husband, Gabriel, returns home late from a fashion shoot, and Alicia shoots him five times in the face, and then never speaks another word. Her refusal to speak, or give any kind of explanation, turns a domestic tragedy into something far grander, a mystery that captures the public imagination and casts Alicia into notoriety. The price of her art skyrockets, and she, the silent patient, is hidden away from the tabloids and spotlight at the Grove, a secure forensic unit in North London.

Theo Faber is a criminal psychotherapist who has waited a long time for the opportunity to work with Alicia. His determination to get her to talk and unravel the mystery of why she shot her husband takes him down a twisting path into his own motivations—a search for the truth that threatens to consume him.

May 10

Two Nights in Lisbon: A Novel, Chris Pavone (Brenda)

Ariel Pryce wakes up in Lisbon, alone. Her husband is gone with no warning, no note, not answering his phone. She starts with hotel security, then the police, then the American embassy, at each confronting questions she can't fully answer: What exactly is John doing in Lisbon? Why would he drag her along on his business trip? Who would want to harm him? And why does she know so little about her new—much younger—husband? Tautly wound and expertly crafted, this is a riveting thriller about a woman under pressure, and how far she will go when everything is on the line.

June 14

The Lost Apothecary: A Novel, Sarah Penner (Chris)

Hidden in the depths of eighteenth-century London, a secret apothecary shop caters to an unusual kind of clientele. Women across the city whisper of a mysterious figure named Nella who sells well-disguised poisons to use against the oppressive men in their lives. But the apothecary's fate is jeopardized when her newest patron, a precocious twelve-year-old, makes a fatal mistake, sparking a string of consequences that echo through the centuries.

Meanwhile in present-day London, aspiring historian Caroline Parcellwell spends her tenth wedding anniversary alone, running from her own demons. When she stumbles upon a clue to the unsolved apothecary murders that haunted London two hundred years ago, her life collides with the apothecary's in a stunning twist of fate—and not everyone will survive.