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Monroe Township Library

Back To School (September 2024)

Ninth House (Alex Stern#1)- Bardugo, Leigh

FIC BARDUGO

Galaxy “Alex” Stern is the most unlikely member of Yale’s freshman class. Raised in the Los Angeles hinterlands by a hippie mom, Alex dropped out of school early and into a world of shady drug-dealer boyfriends, dead-end jobs, and much, much worse. In fact, by age twenty, she is the sole survivor of a horrific, unsolved multiple homicide. Some might say she’s thrown her life away. But at her hospital bed, Alex is offered a second chance: to attend one of the world’s most prestigious universities on a full ride. What’s the catch, and why her?

Still searching for answers, Alex arrives in New Haven tasked by her mysterious benefactors with monitoring the activities of Yale’s secret societies. Their eight windowless “tombs” are the well-known haunts of the rich and powerful, from high-ranking politicians to Wall Street’s biggest players. But their occult activities are more sinister and more extraordinary than any paranoid imagination might conceive. They tamper with forbidden magic. They raise the dead. And, sometimes, they prey on the living.

The School of Essential Ingredients- Bauermeister, Erica

FIC BAUERMEISTER

Once a month on a Monday night, eight students gather in Lillian's restaurant for a cooking class. Among them is Claire, a young woman coming to terms with her new identity as a mother; Tom, a lawyer whose life has been overturned by loss; Antonia, an Italian kitchen designer adapting to life in America; and Carl and Helen, a long-married couple whose union contains surprises the rest of the class would never suspect.

The students have come to learn the art behind Lillian's soulful dishes, but it soon becomes clear that each seeks a recipe for something beyond the kitchen. And soon they are transformed by the aromas, flavors, and textures of what they create....

Size 12 is Not Fat (Heather Wells #1)- Cabot, Meg**FIC CABOT**

Heather Wells rocks!

Or, at least, she did. That was before she left the pop-idol life behind after she gained a dress size or two - and lost a boyfriend, a recording contract, and her life savings (when Mom took the money and ran off to Argentina). Now that the glamour and glory days of endless mall appearances are in the past, Heather's perfectly happy with her new size 12 shape (the average for the American woman!) and her new job as an assistant dorm director at one of New York's top colleges. That is until the dead body of a female student from Heather's residence hall is discovered at the bottom of an elevator shaft.

The cops and the college president are ready to chalk the death up as an accident, the result of reckless youthful mischief. But Heather knows teenage girls, and girls do not elevator surf. Yet no one wants to listen - not the police, her colleagues, or the PI who owns the brownstone where she lives - even when more students start turning up dead in equally ordinary and subtly sinister ways.

So Heather makes the decision to take on yet another new career: spunky girl detective! But her new job comes with few benefits, no cheering crowds, and lots of liabilities, some of them potentially fatal. And nothing ticks off a killer more than a portly ex-pop star who's sticking her nose where it doesn't belong.

I'd Tell You I Love You but Then I'd Have to Kill You (Gallagher Girls#1)- Carter, Ally**YA MYS CARTER**

Cammie Morgan is a student at the Gallagher Academy for Exceptional Young Women, a fairly typical all-girls school -- that is, if every school taught advanced martial arts in PE and the latest in chemical warfare in science, and students received extra credit for breaking CIA codes in computer class. The Gallagher Academy might claim to be a school for geniuses but it's really a school for spies.

Even though Cammie is fluent in fourteen languages and capable of killing a man in seven different ways, she has no idea what to do when she meets an ordinary boy who thinks she's an ordinary girl. Sure, she can tap his phone, hack into his computer, or track him through town with the skill of a real "pavement artist" -- but can she maneuver a relationship with someone who can never know the truth about her?

Cammie Morgan may be an elite spy-in-training, but in her sophomore year, she's on her most dangerous mission -- falling in love.

The Water is Wide- Conroy, Pat**372.975 CON**

The island is nearly deserted, haunting, beautiful. Across a slip of ocean lies South Carolina. But for the handful of families on Yamacraw Island, America is a world away. For years the people here lived proudly from the sea, but now its waters are not safe. Waste from industry threatens their very existence unless, somehow, they can learn a new way. But they will learn nothing without someone to teach them, and their school has no teacher—until one man gives a year of his life to the island and its people.

Erotic Stories for Punjabi Widows- Jaswal, Balli Kaur**FIC JASWAL**

A lively, sexy, and thought-provoking East-meets-West story about community, friendship, and women's lives at all ages - a spicy and alluring mix of *Together Tea* and *Calendar Girls*.

Every woman has a secret life....

Nikki lives in cosmopolitan West London, where she tends bar at the local pub. The daughter of Indian immigrants, she's spent most of her 20-odd years distancing herself from the traditional Sikh community of her childhood, preferring a more independent (that is, Western) life. When her father's death leaves the family financially strapped, Nikki, a law school dropout, impulsively takes a job teaching a "creative writing" course at the community center in the beating heart of London's close-knit Punjabi community.

Because of a miscommunication, the proper Sikh widows who show up are expecting to learn basic English literacy, not the art of short-story writing. When one of the widows finds a book of sexy stories in English and shares it with the class, Nikki realizes that beneath their white dupattas, her students have a wealth of fantasies and memories. Eager to liberate these modest women, she teaches them how to express their untold stories, unleashing creativity of the most unexpected - and exciting - kind.

As more women are drawn to the class, Nikki warns her students to keep their work secret from the Brotherhood, a group of highly conservative young men who have appointed themselves the community's "moral police". But when the widows' gossip offers shocking insights into the death of a young wife - a modern woman like Nikki - and some of the class erotica is shared among friends, it sparks a scandal that threatens them all.

Reading With Patrick- Kuo, Michelle**371.8269 KUO**

Recently graduated from Harvard University, Michelle Kuo arrived in the rural town of Helena, Arkansas, as a Teach for America volunteer, bursting with optimism and drive. But she soon encountered the jarring realities of life in one of the poorest counties in America, still disabled by the legacy of slavery and Jim Crow. In this stirring memoir, Kuo, the child of Taiwanese immigrants, shares the story of her complicated but rewarding mentorship of one student, Patrick Browning, and his remarkable literary and personal awakening.

Convinced she can make a difference in the lives of her teenaged students, Michelle Kuo puts her heart into her work, using quiet reading time and guided writing to foster a sense of self in students left behind by a broken school system. Though Michelle loses some students to truancy and even gun violence, she is inspired by some such as Patrick. Fifteen and in the eighth grade, Patrick begins to thrive under Michelle's exacting attention. However, after two years of teaching, Michelle feels pressure from her parents and the draw of opportunities outside the Delta and leaves Arkansas to attend law school.

Then, on the eve of her law-school graduation, Michelle learns that Patrick has been jailed for murder. Feeling that she left the Delta prematurely and determined to fix her mistake, Michelle returns to Helena and resumes Patrick's education—even as he sits in a jail cell awaiting trial. Every day for the next seven months they pore over classic novels, poems, and works of history. Little by little, Patrick grows into a confident, expressive writer and a dedicated reader galvanized by the works of Frederick Douglass, James Baldwin, Walt Whitman, W. S. Merwin, and others. In her time reading with Patrick, Michelle is herself transformed, contending with the

legacy of racism and the questions of what constitutes a “good” life and what the privileged owe to those with bleaker prospects.

The Disreputable History of Frankie Landau-Banks- Lockhart, E.

YA FIC LOCKHART

The hilarious and razor-sharp story of how one girl went from geek to patriarchy-smashing criminal mastermind in two short years.

Normal People- Rooney, Sally

FIC ROONEY

Connell and Marianne grew up in the same small town, but the similarities end there. At school, Connell is popular and well liked, while Marianne is a loner. But when the two strike up a conversation—awkward but electrifying—something life changing begins.

A year later, they’re both studying at Trinity College in Dublin. Marianne has found her feet in a new social world while Connell hangs at the sidelines, shy and uncertain. Throughout their years at university, Marianne and Connell circle one another, straying toward other people and possibilities but always magnetically, irresistibly drawn back together. And as she veers into self-destruction and he begins to search for meaning elsewhere, each must confront how far they are willing to go to save the other.

Normal People is the story of mutual fascination, friendship, and love. It takes us from that first conversation to the years beyond, in the company of two people who try to stay apart but find that they can’t.

Prep- Sittenfeld, Curtis

FIC SITTENFELD

Lee Fiora is an intelligent, observant 14-year-old when her father drops her off in front of her dorm at the prestigious Ault School in Massachusetts. She leaves her animated, affectionate family in South Bend, Indiana, at least in part because of the boarding school’s glossy brochure, in which boys in sweaters chat in front of old brick buildings, girls in kilts hold lacrosse sticks on pristinely mown athletic fields, and everyone sings hymns in chapel.

As Lee soon learns, Ault is a cloistered world of jaded, attractive teenagers who spend summers on Nantucket and speak in their own clever shorthand. Both intimidated and fascinated by her classmates, Lee becomes a shrewd observer of - and, ultimately, a participant in - their rituals and mores. As a scholarship student, she constantly feels like an outsider and is both drawn to and repelled by other loners. By the time she’s a senior, Lee has created a hard-won place for herself at Ault. But when her behavior takes a self-destructive and highly public turn, her carefully crafted identity within the community is shattered.

Ultimately, Lee’s experiences - complicated relationships with teachers; intense friendships with other girls; an all-consuming preoccupation with a classmate who is less than a boyfriend and more than a crush; conflicts with her parents, from whom Lee feels increasingly distant - coalesce into a singular portrait of the painful and thrilling adolescence universal to us all.

The Secret History- Tartt, Donna

FIC TARTT

Under the influence of a charismatic classics professor, a group of clever, eccentric misfits at a New England college discover a way of thought and life a world away from their banal contemporaries. But their search for the transcendent leads them down a dangerous path, beyond human constructs of morality.

Educated- Westover, Tara

270.092 WES

Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Her family was so isolated from mainstream society that there was no one to ensure the children received an education, and no one to intervene when one of Tara's older brothers became violent. When another brother got himself into college, Tara decided to try a new kind of life. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents, to Harvard and to Cambridge University. Only then would she wonder if she'd traveled too far, if there was still a way home.