



## MPL 2022 Reading List

**January:**     ***The Good Sister, by Sally Hepworth***

There's only been one time that Rose couldn't stop me from doing the wrong thing and that was a mistake that will haunt me for the rest of my life.

Fern Castle works in her local library. She has dinner with her twin sister Rose three nights a week. And she avoids crowds, bright lights and loud noises as much as possible. Fern has a carefully structured life and disrupting her routine can be...dangerous.

When Rose discovers that she cannot get pregnant, Fern sees her chance to pay her sister back for everything Rose has done for her. Fern can have a baby for Rose. She just needs to find a father. Simple.

Fern's mission will shake the foundations of the life she has carefully built for herself and stir up dark secrets from the past, in this quirky, rich and shocking story of what families keep hidden.

**February:**   ***The Midnight Library, by Matt Haig***

Between life and death there is a library, and within that library, the shelves go on forever. Every book provides a chance to try another life you could have lived. To see how things would be if you had made other choices . . . Would you have done anything different, if you had the chance to undo your regrets?

**March:**       ***The Last Night in London, by Karen White***

A captivating story of friendship, love and betrayal – and finding hope in the darkness of war.

**April:**       ***Two Old Men and a Baby, by Hendrik Groen***

Hendrik Groen and Evert Duiker, faithful friends in good and bad times, are well over seventy and their lives have quieted down. They see each other once a week to play chess, have a drink, and grab a bite to eat while reflecting on life.

But one day, their peace is rudely disturbed when Evert shows up on Hendrik's doorstep with a surprise in the form of an unexpected little guest. He had spotted a stroller with a baby in it – unattended for just a minute – and, in a moment of utter

madness, decided to take it for a walk. Hilarious, right? Not to Hendrik, who can barely believe his friend's stupidity.

After Evert regains recovers from his momentary lapse of sanity, the two seventy-year-olds resolve to return their charge to its parents — hopefully without being noticed. But the quiet neighborhood is now swarmed by bumbling police officers, and they realize that getting rid of their accidental foster child will be more difficult than expected.

Have a drink, and grab a bite to eat while reflecting on life.

**May:            *The Four Winds, by Kristine Hannah***

Texas, 1934. Millions are out of work and a drought has broken the Great Plains. Farmers are fighting to keep their land and their livelihoods as the crops are failing, the water is drying up, and dust threatens to bury them all. One of the darkest periods of the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl era, has arrived with a vengeance.

In this uncertain and dangerous time, Elsa Martinelli—like so many of her neighbors—must make an agonizing choice: fight for the land she loves or go west, to California, in search of a better life. *The Four Winds* is an indelible portrait of America and the American Dream, as seen through the eyes of one indomitable woman whose courage and sacrifice will come to define a generation.

**June:           *Apples Never Fall, by Laine Moriarty***

The Delaney family love one another dearly—it's just that sometimes they want to murder each other . . .

**July:            *The Booksellers Secret, by Michele Gable***

In 1942, London, Nancy Mitford is worried about more than air raids and German spies. Still recovering from a devastating loss, the once sparkling Bright Young Thing is estranged from her husband, her allowance has been cut, and she's given up her writing career. On top of this, her five beautiful but infamous sisters continue making headlines with their controversial politics.

Eager for distraction and desperate for income, Nancy jumps at the chance to manage the Heywood Hill bookshop while the owner is away at war. Between the shop's brisk business and the literary salons, she hosts for her eccentric friends, Nancy's life seems on the upswing. But when a mysterious French officer insists that she has a story to tell, Nancy must decide if picking up the pen again and revealing all is worth the price she might be forced to pay.

Eighty years later, Heywood Hill is abuzz with the hunt for a lost wartime manuscript written by Nancy Mitford. For one woman desperately in need of a change, the search will reveal not only a new side to Nancy, but an even more surprising link between the past and present...

**August:        *The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie: A Flavia de Luce Mystery,*  
by Alan Bradley**

It is the summer of 1950—and at the once-grand mansion of Buckshaw, young Flavia de Luce, an aspiring chemist with a passion for poison, is intrigued by a series of inexplicable events: A dead bird is found on the doorstep, a postage stamp bizarrely pinned to its beak. Then, hours later, Flavia finds a man lying in the cucumber patch and watches him as he takes his dying breath.

For Flavia, who is both appalled and delighted, life begins in earnest when murder comes to Buckshaw. “I wish I could say I was afraid, but I wasn’t. Quite the contrary. This was by far the most interesting thing that had ever happened to me in my entire life.”

**September: *Dear Mrs. Bird, by A.J. Pearce***

A charming, irresistible debut novel set in London during World War II about an adventurous young woman who becomes a secret advice columnist—a warm, funny, and enormously moving story.

**October: *Paris is Always a Good Idea, by Jenn McKinlay***

It's been seven years since Chelsea Martin embarked on her yearlong post-college European adventure. Since then, she's lost her mother to cancer and watched her sister marry twice, while Chelsea's thrown herself into work, becoming one of the most talented fundraisers for the American Cancer Coalition, and with the exception of one annoyingly competent coworker, Jason Knightley, her status as most talented fundraiser is unquestioned.

When her introverted mathematician father announces he's getting remarried, Chelsea is forced to acknowledge that her life stopped after her mother died, and that the last time she can remember being happy, in love, or enjoying her life was on her gap year. Inspired to retrace her steps--to find Colin in Ireland, Jean Claude in France, and Marcelino in Italy--Chelsea hopes that one of these three men who stole her heart so many years ago, can help her find it again.

From the start of her journey nothing goes as planned, but as Chelsea reconnects with her old self, she also finds love in the very last place she expected.

**November: *The Personal Librarian, by Marie Benedict***

The remarkable, little-known story of Belle da Costa Greene, J. P. Morgan's personal librarian--who became one of the most powerful women in New York despite the dangerous secret she kept in order to make her dreams come true.

**December: *The Christmas Bookshop, by Jenny Colgan***

When the department store she works in closes for good, Carmen has perilously little cash and few options. She doesn't want to move in with her perfect sister Sofia, in Sofia's perfect house with her perfect children and her perfectly ordered Edinburgh life.

Frankly, Sofia doesn't exactly want Carmen there either. Her sister has always been sarcastic and difficult. But Sofia has yet another baby on the way, a mother desperate to see her daughters get along, and a client who needs a retail assistant for his ailing bookshop, so welcoming Carmen might still have some benefits for everyone.

At Sofia's behest, Carmen is thrown into the daily workings of old Mr. McCredie's ancient bookshop on the streets of the old dark city. Can she use her design skills to revamp the store and bring it back to popularity in time to benefit from Christmas shopping traffic? Can she choose between bad boy literary rock star Blair and quiet Quaker student Oke? And will she heal the rift with the most important people of all: her family?