

Recent Reads

April Ide, Assistant Library Director

I have recently worked my way through a great streak of books. I love it when I find so many in a row that I enjoy and can't wait to finish. I'll share my recent reads with you, in the hope that one of them can set you off on a great reading streak.

Bea Schumacher is a well-known plus-size fashion blogger. After having her heart broken by Ray, the best friend she's loved forever, she accepts an invitation to be the next star of *Main Squeeze*, a Bachelorette-like show that invites a group of men to compete for a chance at love with the star. Bea recognizes that this could be a great career move, one that would give her a lot of exposure. She's not sure she's ready to move on from Ray, but decides to go for it. As she gets to know the male contestants, Bea finds that she has an instant connection with some, an instant animosity toward others, and that there are some that she can't quite pin down. On top of that, she's struggling with her own insecurities and broken heart. I really enjoyed "One to Watch" by Kate Stayman-London; it was a funny, smart, and sweet story of modern reality-TV fame and love.

Gene Mulvihill began building Action Park in 1976, when he decided to add an Alpine Slide attraction to his ski resort in Vernon, New Jersey. Mulvihill was looking for a way to add year-round appeal to the resort, and a way to thrill his customers. The Alpine Slide provided just that; thrill-seekers could use wooden carts to slide down a 2,700 foot track built on one of the steep ski trails, with only a joystick to steer and brake. Mulvihill wanted to provide an amusement park where the people were in charge of the action and added attractions like go-cart racing, high dives, a wave pool, and more, adding 75 rides in 20 years. The park was known for offering wild thrills, but also gained a reputation for injuring patrons. At least six people died on rides at the park while it was open. Mulvihill continued to add attractions until Action Park filed bankruptcy and closed in 1996, partly due to several lawsuit settlements owed to individuals injured in the park. "Action Park: Fast Times, Wild Rides, and the Untold Story of America's Most Dangerous Amusement Park" was a fascinating, funny, and often shocking story, written by Gene's son Andy Mulvihill, who worked at the park in his teens and twenties.

Julian is a lonely 79-year-old widower longing for connection and meaning. He writes his story down in a notebook, titles it "The Authenticity Project," and leaves it on a table in his favorite neighborhood cafe. Monica, the cafe owner, finds the notebook, adds her story, and then leaves it across the street in a wine bar. As each new person adds to notebook, they make connections with others in their neighborhood and end up making Monica's cafe their gathering place. "The Authenticity Project" by Claire Pooley was an uplifting read and I liked the character interactions and relationships.

Will and Jules are getting married on a boggy, rumored-to-be-haunted island off the coast of Ireland when one of the waiters staggers into the party and announces she's found a body outside. We learn that each member of the wedding party might have a motive for murdering someone else, but the identities of the killer and victim aren't revealed until the end. If you like your stories to end with each story line tied up in

a neat little bow, then this book is for you! I thoroughly enjoyed the atmosphere of “The Guest List” by Lucy Foley.

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