PLAY DEAD

Elise was left on a graveyard as a newborn. Her mother was a prostitute, and her father was a root doctor, Jackson Sweet. Set in Savannah, the Elise Sandburg series of books have a little bit of Voodoo and plenty of murders to solve. If you like a mystery series that has some horror, zombies (manmade) and plenty of serial murders, this series is for you. Elise is a very strong female lead and I really enjoyed following her story. —Judy Howell

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LONG WAY TO A SMALL ANGRY PLANET

This fantastic science fiction novel will appeal to fans of Star Trek or Firefly. In it you have beings, both human and alien, on a rickety spaceship, essentially helping to construct highways in space. The best part are the interactions amongst the crew. For the most part, everyone gets along, but there are bumps along the road due to breakdowns in intercultural understanding. I found this to be fascinating. Chambers goes much further in how different cultures can be than Star Trek ever did and makes sure to give the aliens hilarious conversations where they are discussing how bizarre human customs are. This was a book with a large page count that went very quickly. —Michelle Fields

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A DUTY TO THE DEAD

A Duty to the Dead is the introductory book for the Bess Crawford Mystery Series. We meet Bess while she is serving on a medical ship during World War I. Bess meets a young soldier, and he gives her a message for his family. During her recovery time, she travels to the young soldier’s home and gives the message to his family. They don’t seem to be concerned about fulfilling his last wish. This doesn’t sit well with Bess because she feels that she has a duty to the dead soldier. Join Bess as she untangles the family connections and history to grant a dying wish. —JH

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**What We Are Currently Reading**

**Judy:**
- *Truth or Die* by James Patterson
- *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte
- *Ann Boleyn* by Paul Friedman
- *Kindred* by Octavia Butler

**Michelle:**
- *The Prestige* by Christopher Priest
- *Knots and Crosses* by Ian Rankin
- *Waverley* by Sir Walter Scott
- *Radiance* by Catherynne M. Valante
- *Between Two Thorns* by Emma Newman
- *Kindred* by Octavia Butler

*Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte

Would you like to make a book recommendation? We are looking for guest reviewers. If you are interested, please contact either Michelle Fields or Judy Howell by Sept. 26. Recommendations only have to be around 100 words, so please join the fun. We enjoy hearing about new books just as much as we like telling other people about ones we’ve enjoyed!

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**IN THE WOODS**

*In the Woods* is the first novel in French’s Dublin Murder Squad. While I love reading about Ireland, I don’t recall reading a murder mystery/thriller set in the Emerald Isle before. This is in the vein of the dark, gritty mysteries that are very popular right now. They owe a debt to the original hard boiled detectives of Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett, but there is much more emphasis placed on character development. The most interesting aspect of *In the Woods* is watching the main character fall apart along the way. In his youth, Rob Ryan, went into the woods with two friends and he was the only one to return. He has no memory of what happened that day. Now his past has come back to haunt him as a girl’s body is found in the same area. Ryan and his partner, Cassie, are forced to dive into the secrets of the past while confronting the horrific secrets of the present. — MF

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**CATHERINE HOWARD**

Catherine Howard was Henry's Fifth Failure at marriage. Henry married Catherine as a very young girl and then was surprised when the marriage failed. He referred to her as his rose without a thorn. At the end of his marriage, Henry was devastated when he discovered that his wife Catherine was not faithful. This novel is a recounting of this story from Catherine's perspective. I found it very interesting to see the story from the viewpoint of this very simple girl. Catherine was barely literate, and I don't think she understood the danger in which she placed herself. — JH

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**MURDER AT THE BRIGHTWELL**

If you prefer your mysteries to be of a lighter fare than the dark *In the Woods*, you might try this delicious trifle. Imagine the Fred Astaire movie *Top Hat* with an Agatha Christie type murder mystery woven into the high jinks of the pampered upper class staying at the posh Brightwell hotel. Amory Ames has come, on the pleading of a friend, to help discourage his sister from marrying a potential golddigger. Her estranged husband, Milo, pops up to complicate matters. There is an element of screwball comedy here, think *The Awful Truth*, but it is definitely not all fun and games. This is a very nice Saturday/Sunday afternoon read. — MF

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