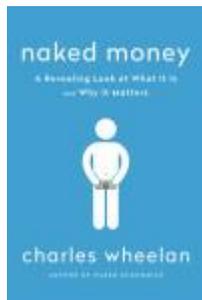


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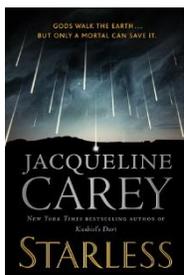
Eileen



***Naked Money* by Charles Wheelan**

Another local author for me! Charles Wheelan teaches at Dartmouth College. This 2016 book covers what money is and why it matters for laypeople. It takes an abstract subject and provides common sense insight and understandable examples. I was especially interested in the section on Bitcoin and other cryptocurrency.

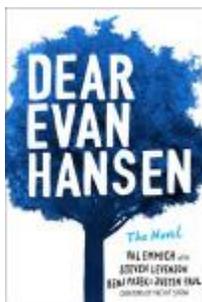
Katherine



***Starless* by Jacqueline Carey**

This epic fantasy was one of the best, if not *the best* book I read last year. It was fortunately (for me, anyway) lacking in the unusual explicit content of some of the author's previous books, and in fact was fairly PG-13 as far as any sexual content goes. The world-building was exquisitely done - there are many cultures at play here, and each one is unique, vivid, and without a clear parallel to human culture. The same can be said of the characters - all the major characters are well-developed, frequently flawed, and still likable or at least sympathetic. I enjoyed the mythological aspects of the story as well. One quibble I did have was a diagnosis scene that *clearly* references chakras and blockages therein. In a less carefully constructed book, I probably wouldn't have even noticed. However, that page or two is the only real complaint I had in the long and hefty book. It was also an extremely engaging read - there were plot twists and action aplenty, and plenty of deep emotional drama between characters to keep you involved. Recommended for fans of Tolkien or George R. R. Martin.

Kelly H.

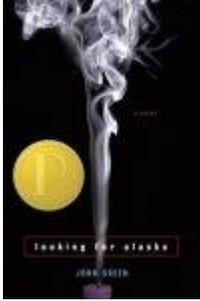


***Dear Evan Hansen* by Val Emmich**

If there were any two words to describe Mark Evan Hansen, they would be “nervous wreck”. He has only one friend (who’s fair-weather at best), no semblance of guts to talk to his long-time crush, and the worst luck in history. His constant state of anxiety results in his therapist deciding that Evan should write himself letters to motivate himself. Begrudgingly, with a bit of a push from his mother, Evan writes the letter, talking to himself about his life, his low expectations, his wishes to be better, and his admiration for his longtime crush, Zoe Murphy. He prints it fast, hoping to leave school and finds his letter in the hands of school bad-boy Connor Murphy. Ticked off at Evan’s love towards his sister, Connor runs off leaving Evan in a long-lasting anxious state. He attends school in fear until he is called to the principal’s office, where Mr. and Mrs. Murphy are waiting for him. The couple tells him between sobs that their son had taken his own life and, because of Evan’s awful luck, they’ve assumed Evan’s note to self was their son’s suicide note. Awestruck and nervous, Evan concedes and begins the spiral of lies he can’t escape from; “We were best friends.”

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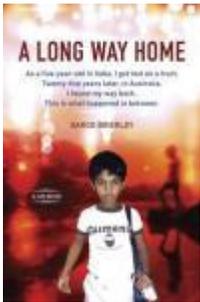
Sarah



***Looking for Alaska* by John Green**

Miles "Pudge" Halter has decided to attend his father's private school Alma Mater. While there he falls in with a group of friends that orbits around enigmatic Alaska Young. Miles connects with Alaska over literature and philosophy but ultimately fails to really "see" her. When a cataclysmic event happens, Miles is left reeling and trying to understand the purpose of suffering in life, his relationship with Alaska, who Alaska really is, and how to create meaning in a seemingly pointless world. John Green writes from a teen perspective but with a depth that is relatable across generations.

Cheryl



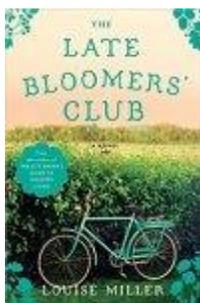
***A Long Way Home* by Saroo Brierley**

This month I share with you the absorbing memoir of 5-year old Saroo. Accidentally separated from his family in India, he finds himself asleep on a train and awakens far from home on the busy streets of Calcutta. With little knowledge of address and names from where he came, penniless as well a young child might be, the streets quickly absorbed him. He was later placed in an orphanage where Saroo was adopted and moved to Australia.

Fast forward 25 years, and the story is of Saroo living a successful and meaningful life, yet memories of his birth family remain etched deeply in his heart. With an absolute loving respect for his adoptive parents he begins a search for his family in India, a seemingly impossible task with few childhood memories of long ago.

I found find this memoir inspirational, heart wrenching yet joyful, and a truly enjoyable book!

Kelly R.



***The Late Bloomers' Club* by Louise Miller**

Coast into March with another easy-peasy little read by Louise Miller. The Late Bloomers' Club is the second book written by this author, a real life pastry chef from Massachusetts. If you've read the author's first book, *The City Baker's Guide to Country Living*, you will enjoy catching up with some of the old characters from Guthrie, VT. The story unfolds when Peggy, the local "cake lady," suddenly passes away. Everyone is surprised when it is discovered that Peggy who had no next of kin leaves her old farmhouse and acreage to Nora, the owner of the Miss Guthrie Diner and her artsy film-making sister, Kit who grew up down the road. Along with the property comes a list of special cake orders that the sisters feel obliged to fill even though neither really knows how to bake. The sisters feel overwhelmed with everything including the quandary of what to do with the property – keep it (which they don't feel they can afford) or sell it to a developer. Of course, as in most small towns, the folks in Guthrie have their opinions on both. Mix in a dash of an hidden treasure, a pinch of romance, and a sprinkling of mysterious relationships and this story (along with its descriptive recipes) will entertain anyone in the mood to snuggle by a warm fire and have another good read before spring arrives.