

Future reads (May-June)

The next read on our list is *Small Wars* by Sadie Jones. It is the story of a family based around the military career of the husband and the trials that this puts the family through. The husband succumbs to the pressures of defending Cyprus against the Cypriots and he becomes increasingly distant from his wife. As always I will briefly outline what the reviews think of it to get us thinking about it: "this is an unforgiving, far from comfortable read, but a very compelling one" Says Metro. "Small Wars is a gripping account of emotional disintegration...A well-paced novel possessing both literary and moral integrity" rated Sunday Telegraph Books. And Times Literary Supplement says "Here Jones's talent really shows...In an excellent encounter with a military psychiatrist, the dialogue breaks like dry twigs." So it seems like we have another good book coming up.

Currently reading (April- May)

We are currently reading *The Secret Scripture* by Sebastian Barry. I am especially interested to start this read as I think females in mental health hospitals are reasonably fashionable in fiction writing at the moment, such as *The disappearing act of Esme Lennox* by Maggie O'Farrel, so I look forward to enjoying this trend further. For more information here is the blurb:

"Roseanne McNulty, perhaps nearing her one-hundredth birthday - no one is quite sure - faces an uncertain future, as the Roscommon Regional Mental Hospital where she's spent the best part of her adult life prepares for closure. Over the weeks leading up to this upheaval, she talks often with her psychiatrist Dr Grene. This relationship, guarded but trusting after so many years, intensifies and complicates as Dr Grene mourns the death of his wife.

Told through their respective journals, the story that emerges - of Roseanne's family in 1930s Sligo - is at once shocking and deeply beautiful. Refracted through the haze of memory and retelling, Roseanne's story becomes an alternative, secret, history of Ireland. Exquisitely written, it is the story of a life blighted by terrible mistreatment and ignorance, and yet marked still by love and passion and hope."

Books we have just completed (March-April)

The beautiful mix of developed character creation, the vividly described Spanish countryside and the historical background makes this read unlike any we have tackled so far. Not only was the book informative " I didn't know anything about the Spanish Civil War until I read this" but it was also enjoyable and extremely vivid. The Spanish countryside came alive in all its beauty and then got destroyed before my eyes. It was an easy and inviting read, and especially once past the first 100 pages; the story became very gripping and compelling. Everyone at the group would recommend this read to a friend; "absolutely fantastic!"