

From the Stacks
By Julie Orf
Dunklin County Library

It is winter! That magical time of year when everything feels a bit quieter, a little slower, and *so much colder*. Curling up under a thick blanket with snow falling and just the right book sounds pleasant. In 1981, writer and professor Noel Perrin wrote in the *Washington Post* about winter reading, suggesting to do "what I would call binge-reading: a one-to- two-day period when you do nothing but lie around and read a single huge book. Winter invites that. Since it is mostly dark and cold outside, there is not the same incentive to be up and doing that there is the rest of the year. On a weekend morning, there may not even be much incentive to get out of bed. The solution (provided you don't have small children) is once in a while not to. Spend the whole weekend in bed."

The right book and atmosphere may create the perfect excuse to stay under the covers. Brew some coffee and bake some cookies to enjoy the mystery, the romance novel, the memoir, or something else you have been yearning to read. A winter-themed book will help set the mood.

In *Light on Snow* by Anita Shreve, Nicky is a 12-year-old who lives with her father in New Hampshire after an accident tragically killed her mother and baby sister. During a walk in the snow, they find an abandoned baby. First, they are thrust into a criminal investigation. Then, a woman connected to the baby appears at their home as a blizzard begins. They reckon with the darkness in their lives and try to find the light. This novel forces the reader to empathize with the characters in its fast pace.

A snowdrift halts the Orient Express to a stop. By morning, an American tycoon lies dead in his compartment, having been stabbed a dozen times, with his door locked from the inside. Isolated by the snow and with a killer on board, the renowned detective Hercule Poirot must uncover the murderer from a cast of memorable characters full of secrets. This classic locked room mystery, *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie, stands the test of time.

A heart-pounding "whodunit" will set just the right mood for reading. In Ruth Ware's *One by One*, eight coworkers from a trendy London tech start-up are snowed in at a luxurious ski resort in the French Alps. Then, an avalanche cuts the group off from the outside world. It may seem cozy, but as the hours pass without any sign of a possible rescue, the group dwindles, as four characters die "one by one." Ulterior motives and dark secrets are slowly revealed as tensions mount.

Adam and his wife Amelia retreat to the snowy Scottish highlands for a weekend they intend to either save or end their marriage. Adding strain to the marriage are Adam's

inability to recognize faces and his grief over the tragic death of his mother. Amelia's ten wedding anniversary letters to Adam are intermixed with the present storyline. They slowly reveal the past and threaten both their marriage and their lives in the present. Alice Feeney is a master at crafting twists that are precise and unfamiliar yet so believable. *Rock Paper Scissors* will stir "if you really know someone".