

Fiction had been overlooked but novels are not forgotten

Ms Bookmark mentioned that we hadn't looked at many novels lately. She was right. So here goes.

Have you come across the Kinsey Millhone mysteries by Sue Grafton? So far, I have read *B is for Burglar* and *C is for Corpse*.

I don't see myself as a reader of detective novels — I'm more into romance — but a couple of the library staff recommended her books. The last time I read any mysteries was the Trixie Beldon series when I was a youngster.

Each chapter introduces clues that eventually connect to solve the riddle. I find that fascinating. After reading only two mysteries, I look at everyday happenings with a keener eye. Maybe I'll be a sleuth when I grow up.

There is minimal action in these short novels, but plenty of mental exercise. Kinsey is a thorough, methodical detective who writes up each detail of her case on index cards. My kind of woman.

I chuckle a lot over Kinsey's observations of people, places and events. Here's a partial description of Rosie, who runs a groasy-spoon restaurant near Kinsey's apartment. She is "a creature of muumuus and hennaed hair growing low on her forehead. She wears lipstick in a burnt-orange shade that usually exceeds the actual shape of her mouth... The tip of her nose comes close to meeting her upper lip."

Rumor has it that Grafton is going to write a mystery for every letter of the alphabet. And after that she is going to start on the numbers. She seems to be putting them out at the rate of one a year and she's up to F. Grafton's novels are light and suspenseful.

Erica Jong's *Fear of Flying* sold 10 million copies. Will Ms Jong's latest

Bookmark with ESTHER CALDWELL

novel, *Any Woman's Blues* fly that high? The main character, Leila Sand, is an artist, mother and world-class celebrity. She is also addicted to a younger man who is doing nothing to enhance her self-image. Leila sees herself on a destructive path to alcoholism. Let me know how it ends.

I dared not delve into *And Eternity*, Piers Anthony's concluding seventh book in his *Incarnations of Immortality* series. It might be best to start at the first book: *On a Pale Horse*, to make sense of this science-fiction (or is it fantasy?) series. In *And Eternity*, Vita, a mortal, is joined by Orlene and Jolie (I'm not sure what they are) in a search for the meaning of good, evil and divinity. According to the book jacket, "*And Eternity* is the book that had to be written".

We end today's column as we began it — with a mystery. Michael Bond, the author of the children's Paddington Bear stories has also written five gastronomic mysteries starring Monsieur Pamplemousse and his canine friend, Pommes Frites. In *Monsieur Pamplemousse Aloft*, this gourmet and food critic has been requested to create a dining extravaganza for the maiden voyage of a luxury dirigible.

In the course of the story, his car is run off the road by a van of nuns, he hitchhikes a ride with Yasmin, a trapeze artist who will later suffer a terrible accident, he has an unfortunate encounter with a crocodile and he samples unpalatable food at a country inn. Bon appetit!



Photo by JANE MULLER
Dawn Geddes was comforted as she lay "dying" in her role as hurricane survivor during a mock disaster at Kelso on Monday. With her are fellow St. John Ambulance cadets (from left) Claudette and Mariene Costa and Nadia Shermet all from Milton.

St. John Ambulance

Cadets ready if hurricane hits

A hurricane carried away several tents and injured about 40 campers at Kelso Conservation Area on Monday however just more than 100 people are aware of the disaster.

It was an imagined hurricane that was part of a mock disaster exercise for which 120 St. John Ambulance cadets spent the long weekend training. The "victims" were doctored up with bloody make-up, smeared-on bruises and fake symptoms. The cadets who responded to the disaster treated their patients as the real thing.

There were three ambulances on site Monday morning when cadets applied bandages, lifted the injured onto stretchers and administered mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The cadets, between the ages of 11-16, came from as far away as Wel-

land and St. Catharines to await a hurricane and respond to its devastation.

"They learned something useful this weekend instead of just hanging out," said St. John training officer Keith Law of Milton. Mr. Law explained that the weekend camp gives the cadets a chance to practice the first aid and home health care they learn throughout the year.

While camping at Kelso, the cadets combined some practical tasks with earning proficiency badges for cooking and nutrition, natural history, radio communications and camping skills.

Cadets take part in competitions to improve their skills and prepare for duty at public events and at real disasters not unlike the one that took place for them Monday.



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