The Woman in the Library

By Sulari Gentill

Reviewed by Connie Bennett, Vinton Public Library Clerk

Mystery/Romance

Some Raw Language

In the Boston Public Library, four people choose to sit at a large table. One, a writer, tells the story from her point of view. All are strangers, arriving by chance for various purposes. Suddenly, a scream pierces, starting all the patrons and causing a short lockdown, during which security guards search for the source of the terror-filled scream.

During their enforced confinement, the four table companions begin to get acquainted through shared experience and differing opinions of same. The book can be a bit confusing, as it is being written by an author in Australia, but supposedly being written by the main character, Freddie, living in Boston and writing through a scholarship won through “The Sinclair Foundation”. Throughout the book, letters are received from a friend and fellow author, based in Boston. “Leo” makes suggestions and minor corrections to Freddie’s work as to language and word usage, and occasionally includes maps and descriptions of Boston itself. I got the impression that Leo was rather a pushy, would-be writer, attempting to gain notoriety through Freddie’s work.

As time passes, it is discovered that there has, indeed, been a murder (hence the scream), and that the murderer is one of the four new friends at the table! This book abounds in quirky characters, relationships and shocking scenarios. As you read, expect the unexpected and don’t assume anything! One reviewer commented that the book “has more layers than an onion”…I agree! Loved it!!

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Includes a reading group guide and short interview with the author