

For the Love of Books by Moira Silva

Maybe I first heard my mother read “Good Night Moon” to my sisters while I was in her belly. Perhaps the calm repetition, of phrases like “Good night house, good night mouse . . .” gave me the reassurance I needed to enter this crazy world.

With a teacher for a mother, a trip to the Harborfields Library practically trumped the ice cream shop. My sisters and I couldn’t get enough. We had the longest reading log of any children in the library’s program. I had a soft spot for the Berenstain Bears, taking in lessons about caring for animals or the planet. On my 6th birthday, I brimmed with happiness when opening a hardcover copy of “The Teddy Bear’s Picnic,” which came complete with a record that I quickly wore out. Four to None, the Convey sisters can easily agree on a favorite childhood memory: our father reading a tattered copy of “The Night Before Christmas” to us as we lay snuggled around him like puppies. Even Santa somehow knew we loved books and always slipped some new titles under our tree.

When a new edition of my favorite series (i.e. Fear Street or The Sleepover Friends) came out, I was the first one to check it out. These gave me a refuge during the tumultuous middle and high school years. I remember wondering what drew my big sister, Karyn towards her thick Nancy Drew books and feeling equally curious about my older sister, Kerry’s choice of the juicy looking Sweet Valley High. And, I began to enjoy helping my youngest sister discover her own favorites, like Spot.

No shocker, in college, I majored in English, dazzled by the poetry of William Wordsworth and essays of Henry David Thoreau. With little time for pleasure reading, I did manage to fall hard for Harry Potter, anticipating the release of each gripping sequel.

As years passed, I formed a book club filled with insightful women who loved to laugh but could also hold their own in heated discussions over family secrets (“The Memory Keeper’s Daughter”) and the veracity of memoir (“A Million Little Pieces”).

There’s a reason why, as I hugged ‘Little’ Trish hello last weekend, I put my copy of Tina Fey’s hilarious memoir, “Bossypants” in her hand. Books are powerful. They unite. Enchant. Entertain. And comfort. Books are a flowering of new ideas. An invitation to discover fresh characters, emotions and places. A gift of learning through another’s mistakes. A tickle of clever language. The light at the end of a long day.

I just checked my online library account. 37 items checked out. Hmm, I’m only reading five books: “Garbageology,” “A Moveable Feast,” “This Bright Beauty,” “Zero Waste Home” and “This Boy’s Life.” Who are the others for? The loves of my lives: my little boys who are smitten with Fancy Nancy, Henry Huggins and Harry Potter and so many more wonderful characters. Guess I know what the Easter Bunny is going to bring this year.