

As promised, I have February and March's book reviews. However, since most of what I read in February was all one series, I won't break each title down. There are some spoilers in this post, and I've attempted to make the reader aware of them, so that if you wish to find out by reading the titles you should be able to skip ahead and be none the wiser.

February's books were the final eight in the [Glass & Steele series](#). I was really burning through them at an alarming rate until I came to [The Imposter's Inheritance](#). I found it much harder to delve into, and that the title of the story seemed to take the role of a side quest compared to the exploits of Willie, a modern day woman thrown into a story set in 1890. While there's nothing new under the sun, I found the idea of Willie's blatant flaunting of her sexual desires for women irritating. It had gone from being an occasionally mentioned undercurrent to the center stage of the book.

Having already indulged in book one of [The Glass Library](#), and having finished this series I will also confess that I don't think Willie grows much as a character either. She remains selfish, albeit loyal to her family, defensive, and quick tempered. She rarely accepts blame for her own wrongdoings, and when she comes up short will often point the finger as to who or what the problem was, and rarely, if ever, does it swing back at herself. She was certainly not my favorite character in the series.

Spoilers in the next TWO paragraphs, to avoid, skip ahead. I also felt that while every other book's title made perfect sense, this particular one did not. If you're reading the series, and don't want a spoiler, you may wish to skip ahead to the next paragraph. Lord Cox's long held secret, the one that permitted India and Matt to marry, has been revealed. His half-brother flaunts in and while he's considered a fraud, still walks away with the family fortune—and debt. I spent a few days after finishing the book pondering the title based on the final outcome.

I also feel like the story took a different turn once Matt's watch was restored, and his eventual marriage to India. Although leading up to that I found Matt weak and out of character in regards to his uncle's attempts to blackmail him. While the story theme was that Matt wouldn't see one of his female cousins brought to ruin, he was willing to ruin the love of his life instead? That didn't add up to the Matthew Glass we'd come to know and love.

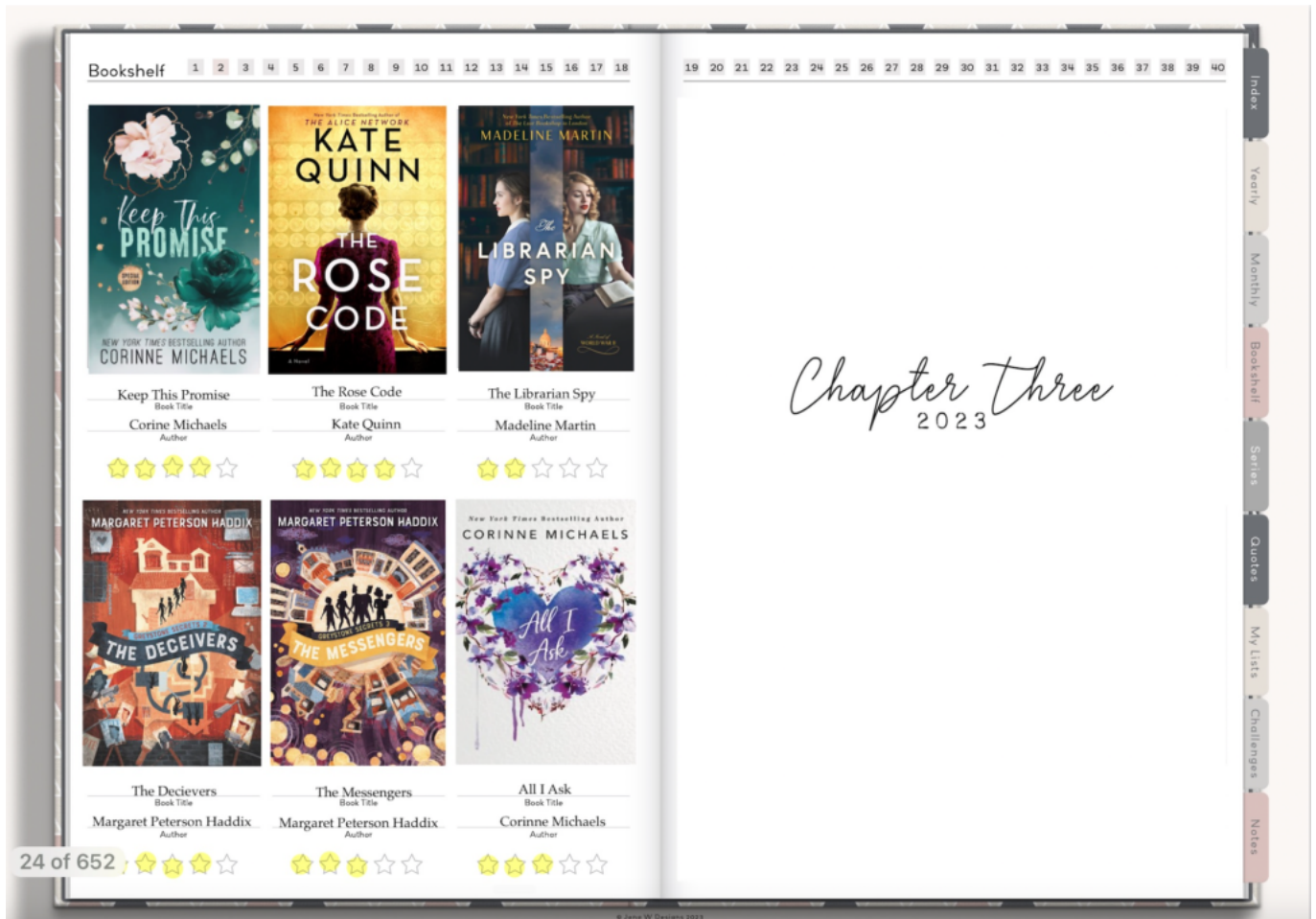
Begin here if avoiding Spoilers: The series did end well, although I wonder if the follow up series about Gabe will shed any light on the time between when one book series ends and the next begins. Once it was all done and settled, I wanted to know more of what happened there. I'm also curious about Kathrine and Cyclops. They come up in the first [Glass Library book](#), as do three daughters who behave in a way I find unexpected considering who their parents are.

I struggled a little bit with what to read next after spending a month and a half engrossed in a single book world, until I realized that the third book in the [Rose Canyon series](#) was out. The three part series has been a mystery that impacted a group of men who've been friends since childhood. It started in the first book with one of them dying, and in each subsequent book the life of another has been in mortal danger. I have no idea if the third book is the end of the series or not. It feels like it might be because each friend has taken their turn in the spotlight, but there were also some loose ends that were not tied up.

[Keep This Promise](#) picks up just before [Give Me Love ended](#), but in England instead of in the US. We learn, in the opening chapter, how the mysterious woman we were introduced to in that final chapter, landed in Rose Canyon looking for Holden. The same mystery that was unfolding previously continues to unfold this time deeply impacting Holden & Sophie when their three year old daughter is kidnapped.

Like the previous two books, I thoroughly enjoyed the mystery that [Michaels](#) wove. It kept me reading well past bedtime, and finding all kinds of excuses to grab my book and pick up where I left off. Again, just like in the previous two books, there are romance scenes that are graphic and well worth jumping over.

My only question after finishing the book is: *What about the mayor, and his son?!* It's the biggest loose end I want an answer to, and the one that makes me wonder if there will be another book or not.



The *Rose Code* has been mentioned multiple times in various reading and writing groups I'm in, my curiosity was peaked. Then I realized it was a WWII book, and I confess I often avoid those topics in books because they can be hard to read about. But in the end I caved, and I'm glad I did. This book still has some hard in it, but not in the typical cruelty and horrors of WWII. Rather the hard comes from choosing to keep promises to the government or protect friends and family with the sensitive information you hold.

Osla, Mab, and Beth all meet due to WWII. Osla, a socialite, wants to be known for something more than just a pretty face who attends parties. Mab is determined to make something of herself in the world and marry well, and rise above her current station in life. They meet on a train bound for a mysterious location the government has summoned them to, and are given no further information.

Their boarding house turns out to be owned by Beth's mother, a pretentious busy body of a

woman who lords her authority over her adult daughter. That is, until Beth is also summoned by the government to work at the mysterious Bletchley Park.

The book spans time, flipping between 1947, considered present day, and the time the girls spent working at Bletchley. We watch as the three girls become friends, and then as their friendship falls apart over one horrific event in their lives. We see the aftermath as we flip to 1947, and a mysterious letter from one of the three arrives begging the other two for help. She has been locked in an asylum for years.

The question is, can they put the past behind them long enough to find the truth behind what really drove them apart?

I loved this book, and found it difficult to put down once I finally got started on it. I say “finally”, because the early part of March was chaotic and each time I’d start to read someone would interrupt me after I’d read all of a half sentence. Let me just say, it’s not the best way to start a book.

The problem with reading such an amazing story, is that often it makes finding another hard. And I think that happened with my next choice. [The Librarian Spy](#) was in my audible library, and I figured I’d read it. I almost wish I hadn’t. It’s not that the story was bad, it wasn’t. In fact it tells about an aspect of WWII that we rarely hear about: Portugal.

We follow the lives of two women, one American working in Portugal for the US Military. Her job is to collect magazines, newspapers, and books. Anything that she feels will help aid the US in understanding exactly what is going in with the war. In doing so she befriends a few people along the way, some like the British chap who help her in very unexpected ways. Some who are racing against time for a new life.

Ava, the American, comes face to face with many immigrants seeking refuge in Portugal while they wait for visas to be approved to move to America. It becomes a waiting game of wondering which will happen first: will their visas be approved or will their money run out.

Elaine works with the French Resistance. After the bitter death of her husband she is

determined to do more, and sends a coded message through a French Resistance newspaper to seek help for a Jewish woman and her young son. The husband left for America before Germany occupied France, the wife and baby stayed behind to care for a sick relative not thinking the war would last so long.

Ava finds the hidden message in one of the newspapers she collects in Portugal, and seeks to help the young mother and her son find a way to safety.

I wanted to love this book, and the story itself was beautifully woven to connect Elaine and Ava. Yet, I really struggled to not label the book flat. I still don't know if it's because I read it on the coattails of *The Rose Code* or not. I'm thinking not, because I've read another book by the talented *Martin*, and while I found the story sweet and fun, it also felt flat.

The issue I had with *The Librarian Spy*, was that each time action seemed to knock on the door, it was flicked away with another sentence. And while no one wants to read gruesome torture scenes of hideous war crimes, I didn't feel the edge of my seat tug that I felt with *The Rose Code*. So while both *Quinn* and *Martin* are talented, I guess I lean more towards the action, edge of your seat writing of *Quinn*. Where as if sitting on the edge of your seat with a racing heart might not be your thing, you might prefer the writing of *Martin*.

And I also accept that what's edge of the seat for one person is not for another. Someday I'll share the hilarity of my husband falling asleep watching a movie I felt was edge of your seat and had me worried, and hiding under a quilt while he blissfully snored away. Who snores when wolves are on the loose, and the world is ending?

The Deceivers & *The Messengers* are books two and three in the Greystone Secrets. I'd read book one while we were still living back on the Island, and book two hadn't been released yet. I purchased it once it was, and then book three, but always grabbed something else to read. I decided to plunge in and find out how the Greystone's story ended.

I enjoyed *The Deceivers*, the action packed sci-fi story kept me going. I loved hearing the story from each child's point of view, knowing what they were feeling, how they viewed their siblings, the longings they held deep inside. I also love how *Haddix* created an entire world

inside of a mansion, where the majority of the book takes place.

The Messengers started out strong, but there seems to be this trend amongst middle school books where they end on a flat note. I found this with another series that I absolutely loved. As though the lesson the author wanted to share suddenly had to be summed up quickly as opposed to letting the story carry it through. There were also some new things introduced in this story that felt out of place having not heard about them in the previous books.

SPOILER: Maybe there was also that hope that the Greystone's Dad would still be alive. I also found it a little odd that the person who seemed to be the bad guy in book one, is suddenly the good guy in book two. It's explained away by being undercover so no one will suspect a thing. **END SPOILERS:** I don't know, I just felt that the final book in the series didn't quite meet the expectations that I'd hoped for, being so different from the previous two.

Having hit two duds and wanting to get at least one more book in this month I decided to try out one of *Michael's* books that was a stand alone. It was a romance, so I expected there to be scenes that might require jumping over, and there were.

In *All I Ask*, we meet Teagan, a single pregnant woman watching her best friend, and secret love, Derek, marry someone else. She never told him she loved him for fear it would ruin their friendship, and she convinced herself she loved him enough to let him go and marry someone she believed he was madly in love with.

Derek settled. He secretly loved Teagan, but didn't think she felt the same way about him. Not wanting to spoil the friendship and lose her forever, he married someone else. When his estranged wife dies he and his teenage daughter move back to his childhood small town.

He hasn't spoken to Teagan in years, his wife having forced him to end the friendship. Teagan only learns he's back in town when she finds out her own daughter, and Derek's, were in a school fight. Teagan and Derek meet each other for the first time in years in the principal's office. Teagan is shocked to learn what her daughter said, whereas Derek is not shocked that his daughter is the mean girl in school.

I enjoyed the read, but I'll also confess it seemed weak in comparison to the [Rose Canyon trilogy](#). The story line was predictable, isn't that often the case with romances? But there were some unexpected twists that sent Teagan spiraling away from what we'd been led to believe she wanted most in the world. I won't spoil it by telling you if she came to her senses before it was too late.



While I really enjoyed reading the [Glass & Steele mystery series](#), I'll also confess I was relieved to have finally finished it. I adored the first half of that series, and I even enjoyed **SPOILER** when Matt and India finally wed and became a duo detective team. But as the series went on, and the difficulties that Matt and India had previously faced were lifted, there was more focus on the side characters. Some, like Cyclops, that we were cheering for, and some like Willie that we just wanted to slap and tell her to grow up. **END SPOILER**

My kids approached me before dinner one night and demanded an explanation of the "[Dude where's my shirt](#)" book, their funny name for romances. To which I confessed I totally read the book and I really loved the whole series and was only saddened that audible didn't have the floral covers. You know, so my young adult kids wouldn't ask for explanations about the "dude where's my shirt" books. The youngest tapped his foot, and rolled his eyes. The eldest told him not to push it too far while scoffing dramatically at me.

I'm looking forward to some fresh titles in April, but I'm also in a slight panic at the time of writing this because it's hard coming up for air after finishing a series, much less three! What do I read next? Where do I go? Should I venture down the path of another series? Should I reread one of my old favorites?

I love revisiting The Lake District with Beatrix in [The Cottage Tales Of Beatrix Potter](#). But I also feel the desire to read something new, and one of [my all time favorite authors](#) has a [new book](#) out. I'm hoping to obtain a copy and read it... leisurely. Although I know I will guzzle it quickly and then spend days thinking about it and wondering if it's too soon to reread. All

while debating writing to the bookshop back on The Island to have a proper [Australian Cover](#).

Then there's the books collecting dust on the bottom of the TBR piles. And the precarious pile of books I had to nudge out of the way the other day so I had room to spread out my yoga mat. Oh, so many choices!!

The Reluctant Author.

