



LITERATURE WITH MELINDA

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This week's literature recommendation is a fairly well-known novel, the first book of a great series. Many students may have already heard of—and possibly read—this novel already; however, it never hurts to reread good books.

"The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo" by Stieg Larsson is the first novel of the "Millennium" series. It is an extremely well-written psychological thriller that was first published posthumously in 2005, after Larsson's death in 2004.

Part of his inspiration for the story is said to be his own personal experience when he was 15, as he stood by while three men raped his acquaintance, Lisbeth. He experienced tremendous guilt for doing nothing, and he asked for forgiveness which was not granted. This inspired the main character, Lisbeth Salander, also a rape victim in his series.

The story begins with Mikael Blomkvist, publisher of the magazine "The Millennium," losing a libel case to billionaire Hans-Erik Wennerstrom and being sentenced to three months in prison. In comes Henrik Vanger and Salander, who promise to investigate and provide evidence against Wennerstrom. There is one condition, however: Blomkvist must find out what happened to Vanger's niece who disappeared mysteriously over 50 years ago.

As Blomkvist digs into the past and as Salander investigates the allegations against Wennerstrom, they become close and begin to work together. This, however, will not be an easy task for either of them. Dishonesty, fraud and murder seem to be around every corner.

I encourage everyone to take the time to read a few books, and possibly this one, during their extra time out of school. If you do not have the time to read the entire book, there is also a film, also called "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo," (2011) based on this novel and directed by David Fincher. Happy reading and come back again next week for another great literature recommendation!

Melinda Rydberg is a junior biochemistry major, looking to go into pharmacology research. In her free time, Melinda likes to read a variety of books – everything from historical fiction to poetry. Feel free to contact her with any questions and/or comments about good books you have read recently.

CHRONICLES OF TOWER HALL: WHEN SPRING IS FAR

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I walked myself to the ocean today and imagined what it would be like to lie down, hair splayed in the tide. And of course this is only partially true. Here is what I should have said: Helen drove us to the shore of Superior today. We dipped our toes into the Gooseberry River and thought about water temperament.

I am dreaming about the way that spring will make all the difference. Here comes a wild freedom and the idea of longer days. The daisies wink up at me and tell me stories about all the summer mischiefs they have seen over the years. I lie my head on the ground so that I might better hear them tell me of first kisses and sunburns and happiness. From here I can hear the dirt whispering about roots, desperate for the return of the crouching worms and eventual harvest.

It tells me of love too, of the kind of love it takes to sacrifice your harvest. Tell me more, talk about recovery. The way things come back together is so much better than the way they fall apart.

But perhaps Helen was not thinking about this rebirth. Perhaps she was thinking of Italian gelato or the idea that I use her too much like a taxi service on days such as these. We have stopped speaking and are relying entirely on the idea of telepathy. She continues to misunderstand me.

I am obsessed with these moments that I have left to live. I am drowning in my make-believe memories and waiting for the moment that life finally becomes what I have asked of it.

Last night I dreamed about driving, restlessly into the kind of future where no one would call my honey and certainly no one would tie a weight around me and call it comfort, familiarity. Driving, tirelessly, until I hit a coastline and could finally watch the ocean soothe away this restless itch in my gut which begs me to be more.

A sprinkle sent us back to the car. Imagine this: we girls who spend our days in revolution, hiding from this rain. Helen has wordlessly decided for us that we will drive back. I am trying to tell her that I cannot leave here, not just yet. But the windows are fogging from the moist heat of our breath and the windshield wipers have become our metronome.

I am milky twilight tired. I am.

Coming up next week: Our Rainforest Minds, Inside.

This is a work of historical fiction and should not be treated as a historical account of boarding school life at the College of Saint Scholastica, Duluth, MN. Information comes from librarian Heidi Johnson and the journals of Hermina von Witzleben (Copyright of the Family of Hermina von Witzleben and Used by Permission).

Heidi Voigt is a junior English literature and Spanish major who hopes to write for the rest of her life. She is obsessed with the history of the College of Saint Scholastica and reading old journals.