



## The Little Library Year: Recipes and Reading to Suit Each Season

**Kate Young**

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Kate Young's cookbook addresses twinned appetites: for rich reading, and for seasonal flavors, from blood oranges in icy winters to vibrant rhubarbs at the first sign of spring.

Young treats both reading and cooking as cozy, pleasurable, and necessary. The book's sections are six to reflect the moods of seasonal changes, and each is followed by a classic-laden recommended reading list. Her kitchen instructions roll past potential challenges with a shrug: "do feel free to cut out biscuits using the rim of a glass [or] roll out pasta using a rolling pin or wine bottle."

The included recipes draw on or complement scenes from Young's favorite novels; some are designed to be cooked alongside meaty chunks of reading. A dim sum selection draws on *The Joy Luck Club*, while pickled and fish dishes nod to children's classics, as with Amy March's prized limes. Here, winter dining for one is an indulgence best exemplified by Yuk hwe, a Korean tartare met in a Han Kang novel that incorporates fine, raw, chilled beef and pear sliced "into fine matchsticks." Not every piece makes a perfect connection, but satisfaction is evident and available throughout.

Young's descriptions and instructions are tactile, earthy, and sensuous. A quick mussel dish evokes "glistening black shells [that make] a comforting clatter," and vermouth, tonic, and basil sipped atop a hill in spring are "fragrant and refreshing." The seasonal prefaces include intimate confessions, adding just a touch of memoir to the already laden text. Young encourages eating with bread and hands, talks of hot fish salted enough to make lips sting, and pushes her audience to peel boiled potatoes when they're just cool enough to bear touching.

Both personal and welcoming, the recipes of *The Little Library Year* are laced with literary recommendations, each tested and approved for their perfect seasonal use.

MICHELLE ANNE SCHINGLER (September / October 2020)

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