***The Library Book* by Susan Orlean**

This book is much more than just a history of the Los Angeles Public Library, or a deep-dive into the unsolved library fire at their Central Library in 1986, in a lot of ways it is a love letter to public libraries in general. Orlean details the long history of LAPL, from its origins in the 1870s, to the devastating fire that destroyed hundreds of thousands of books, to her recent visits to the current LA library branches. It's an intriguing concept for a book, but the execution is somewhat lacking.

It is such a cliché to say this, but I really wanted to love this book. As a library employee, it is obviously right up my alley. It is meticulously well-researched, and I enjoyed learning more about the history of the Los Angeles Public Library. And the true crime/mystery lover in me was enthralled by the unsolved nature of who set the library fire. However, I really struggled with the way the story would jump around in time from chapter to chapter. It made the book hard to stick with and ultimately it took me an incredibly long time to finish the book. If I were giving it a star rating, it would be 3 or 3.5 stars out of 5. It's worth a read, and I would definitely still recommend it if you love libraries, history, and mysteries – but go into it knowing that the book meanders around a bit.

GK